

LANDSCAPE

ISSUE
177

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AUSTRALIA



THE AUTHORSHIP ISSUE

CO-CREATING WITH FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES
CO-AUTHORING IN THE DIGITAL AGE
CREDITING MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS
DESIGNING WITH NON-HUMANS

Feb 2023 A\$16.95



Official Magazine



AUSTRALIAN
INSTITUTE OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

*Proludic –
collaborating with you
in the creation of unique
playspace designs*

- > We support landscape architects in the creation of playspaces perfectly suited to the Australian environment
- > Custom play equipment designs in compliance with playground safety standards
- > Innovative, sustainable and durable products
- > Expert advice and support from start to finish



Ross Reserve All Abilities Playground, Noble Park



Learn more about
custom designs
with Proludic



Proludic 

Designer of play and sports areas

www.proludic.com.au | info@proludic.com.au | 1300 800 181

LANDSCAPE

ISSUE 177

006 — Perspective

Editor Emily Wong introduces this issue of *Landscape Architecture Australia*.

008 — Viewpoint

A message from AILA President Peta-Maree Ashford

010 — Guest editorial

Guest editors Jillian Walliss and Heike Rahmann reflect on the challenges and opportunities of authorship in the contemporary context.

Co-creating

014 — People, stories and place

Yalinguth is a site-specific app that immerses listeners in First Nations stories. Article by Janet McGaw.

021 — Authenticity and authority

Non-Indigenous landscape architects can build mutually nourishing relationships with Country through authorship. Article by Jock Gilbert and Sophia Pearce.

026 — Shifting grounds

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria reflect on more than a decade of joint management. Article by Jen Lynch.

033 — Lunar musings

As we move beyond the Earth, we can set up best practice by giving rights to the Moon. Article by Thomas Gooch.

038 — Tree designers and bird clients

Non-human beings can act as capable participants in the design of the future. Article by Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland.

044 — Rewilding in a post-humanist world

The work of Singapore practice Salad Dressing envisions a world in which humans, nature and machines co-evolve. Article by Jillian Walliss.

Co-authoring

057 — Co-authoring in the digital age

Digital technologies are challenging traditional notions of the designer as author. Article by Heike Rahmann and Daniel Ichallalene.

062 — Who has a right in the copy?

Unpacking what rights and protections might be afforded to landscape architecture works. Article by Michael Wright.

068 — What is authorship?

Perspectives on authorship from a practicing landscape architect. Article by Kirsten Bauer.

074 — On crediting the multidisciplinary project

Understanding what different disciplines are contributing to projects is crucial, if we are to innovate. Article by Ricky Ricardo.

078 — Authorship in the Chinese context

Landscape architecture in China has evolved into diverse field in which individual practices are increasingly influential. Article by Ruiqi Shen.

Cover image: Two Elders who are part of Yalinguth – Uncle Bobby Nicholls (L) and Auntie Rieo Ellis (R) – test the mobile app. Photo: Pip Chandler.

Official Magazine



Endorsed by



Australian
Institute of
Architects



Strategic International Partners

Landscape Architecture Europe Foundation (LAE), Barcelona International Biennial of Landscape Architecture, *Landscape Review* journal

Contributors



Janet McGaw
Janet McGaw is an associate professor of architectural design at the University of Melbourne. Her work explores the relationship between place and identity.



Ruiqi Shen
Ruiqi Shen is a landscape architect and urban designer at Arcadia Landscape Architecture. He is an editor of *Landscape Architecture Frontiers* and *Landscape Architecture China*.



Stanislav Roudavski
Stanislav Roudavski is a senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne, where he researches design for animals, plants, rivers, and rocks, as well as for humans.



Michael Wright
Michael Wright is a director of Rush Wright Associates. He has a background in landscape architecture, horticulture and landscape technology.



Jock Gilbert
Jock Gilbert is a registered landscape architect and a lecturer at RMIT University’s School of Architecture and Urban Design.



Thomas Gooch
Thomas Gooch is the founder and CEO of Office of Planetary Observations and co-author of the Declaration of the Rights of the Moon.



Alexander Holland
Alexander Holland is a researcher at the University of Melbourne. His work investigates the digital and physical characteristics and design opportunities of past and future environments.



Jen Lynch
Jen Lynch is a lecturer in landscape architecture at RMIT University. Her research explores the commons as an alternative lineage to landscape.



Sophia Pearce
Sophia Pearce is a Barkandji scholar, Indigenous knowledge holder and Culpra Milli Aboriginal Corporation project officer.



Kirsten Bauer
Kirsten Bauer is a Director of Aspect Studios. She is interested in the use of technology in the creative process and in the development of culturally informed, site-specific design responses.



Jillian Walliss
Jillian Walliss is an associate professor of landscape architecture at the University of Melbourne.



Ricky Ricardo
Ricky Ricardo is a design writer and communications specialist. He is a former editor of *Landscape Architecture Australia* and was a co-creative director for two AILA Festivals. He works at GroupGSA.



Heike Rahmann
Heike Rahmann is a senior lecturer in landscape architecture at RMIT University. Her research focuses on the intersection of landscape architecture and contemporary urbanism.



Daniel Ichallelene
Daniel Ichallalene is a practising landscape architect and sessional academic at RMIT University. His research explores the intersection of computational design and post-nuclear ecologies.

EDITOR
EMILY WONG

EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES
T +61 3 8699 1000
E LANDSCAPE@ARCHMEDIA.COM.AU

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
KATELIN BUTLER

EDITORIAL TEAM
JUDE ELLISON, NICCI DODANWELA

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
CLAIRE MARTIN, DAN YOUNG,
JULIAN RAXWORTHY, CATHERIN BULL,
RHYS WILLIAMS, VANESSA MARGETTS,
TIM FITZGERALD

GRAPHIC DESIGN / PRODUCTION
GORAN RUPENA

CEO/PUBLISHER JACINTA REEDY
COMPANY SECRETARY IAN CLOSE
GENERAL MANAGER OPERATIONS
JANE WHEELER
GENERAL MANAGER DIGITAL PUBLISHING
MARK SCRUBY
GENERAL MANAGER SALES
MICHAEL POLLARD

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES
ADVERTISING@ARCHMEDIA.COM.AU
T +61 3 8699 1000

PRINT MANAGEMENT
DAI PRINT

SUBSCRIPTIONS
FOUR ISSUES PER YEAR
AUSTRALIA
\$65 AUD (\$126 – 2 YEARS)
OVERSEAS (AIR)
\$100 AUD (\$188 – 2 YEARS)
DIGITAL
\$38 AUD

W ARCHITECTUREMEDIA.COM/STORE
E SUBSCRIBE@ARCHMEDIA.COM.AU

PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, MAY,
AUGUST & NOVEMBER

PUBLISHED AND OWNED BY
ARCHITECTURE MEDIA PTY LTD
ACN 008 626 686
LEVEL 6, 163 EASTERN ROAD
SOUTH MELBOURNE VIC 3205
T +61 3 8699 1000
F +61 3 9696 2617
E PUBLISHER@ARCHMEDIA.COM.AU
W ARCHITECTUREMEDIA.COM

ENDORSED AS THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
OF THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
T +61 2 6248 9970
E ADMIN@AILA.ORG.AU
W AILA.ORG.AU

OPINIONS EXPRESSED ARE NOT
NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE PUBLISHER.
NO RESPONSIBILITY OR LIABILITY IS
ACCEPTED BY THE PUBLISHER FOR
THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION
CONTAINED IN THE TEXT, ILLUSTRATIONS
OR ADVERTISEMENTS.

MEMBER CIRCULATIONS AUDIT BOARD
INCORPORATING LANDSCAPE
AUSTRALIA. COPYRIGHT ©
ARCHITECTURE MEDIA PTY LTD.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
ALL MATERIAL IS COPYRIGHT.

ISSN 1833-4814



SUPPORTING THE FINEST DESIGN.



Scan to see
our design and
specification
tools online.

From hotels and highrises to bridges and stadiums, like Sir John Guise in PNG, Moddex has been supporting great architectural design in Australasia since introducing pre-engineered railings over a decade ago. We've also designed our own system to make your handrail and balustrade choices more flexible, ergonomic, aesthetic and guaranteed, fit-for-purpose compliant.

moddex[®]

1800 MODDEX | MODDEX.COM

A FRESH YEAR

—

The first issue of *Landscape Architecture Australia* for 2023 has landed – and we’re excited for you to read it.

In February of last year, Jillian Walliss and Heike Rahmann contacted us to discuss the possibility of a themed issue of *Landscape Architecture Australia* that unpacked the challenges and opportunities of authorship in relation to landscape architecture. Jillian is an associate professor at the University of Melbourne and Heike is a senior lecturer at RMIT University. Together, they guest-edited the February 2018 issue of the magazine, which examined the exchange of ideas between Australia and Asia.

When they pitched this proposal to us, we were enthusiastic. Working in design publishing as the editor of a landscape architecture magazine, I often feel the pressure of trying to obtain greater recognition for landscape architecture work. In the world of design media, landscape architecture-oriented publishing occupies only a very small niche in an environment heavily dominated by architecture and other larger design disciplines. As Jillian and Heike continued to commission articles and the content of the issue steadily evolved, my view of authorship and its ramifications for how we operate as landscape architects expanded considerably.

This resulting edition is rich with ideas and perspectives on issues that have the potential to profoundly influence how we

understand and position ourselves as designers.

The articles collected here present a critical account of many key issues concerning design and authorship amid evolving technologies, laws, attitudes to nature, the effects of time, and collaborations with other disciplines and non-human entities. Importantly, as the guest editors note in their introduction on page 10: “all landscape architecture is co-authored with the natural world and is continually shaped by cultural forces.”

Many thanks to Jillian and Heike for their commitment to exploring this topic. I also extend my appreciation to the issue’s collaborating contributors for their keen insights and deep knowledge of this area.

In other news, we recently announced the winners of the 2022 Landscape Student Prize – a difficult decision. As with last year, it was the determination of the jury to award two entries, which explore very different ends of the spectrum of landscape architecture practice, the title of joint-winner. Interviews with the designers of each of these projects will be featured on our website in upcoming weeks.

– Emily Wong, editor



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognize their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

- **Follow us**
[@landscapeau](#)
- **Like us**
[facebook.com/landscapeau](#)
- **Follow us**
[@landscapeau](#)
- **Visit us**
[LandscapeAustralia.com](#)



CELEBRATING
48⁺
EST. 1974
YEARS

ADVANCED & SUPER ADVANCED TREES YEAR-ROUND



Industry leaders with the
largest range of Advanced
Trees in the Country

We grow and supply a broad selection of
containerised trees, including deciduous,
exotic evergreens and Australian natives.

Available from 100L up to 2000L sizes for
delivery across Australia.

Pre-order available!



ESTABLISHED TREE TRANSPLANTERS
INNOVATIVE TREE RELOCATION & EX-GROUND SUPPLIERS

Telephone: 03 5964 4240 info@establishedtrees.com.au www.establishedtrees.com.au



REFLECTING ON THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION

—
A message from AILA National President
Peta-Maree Ashford



The concept of authorship is of growing interest for the profession. At the commencement of my career, authorship of a project seemed clear-cut. As a practising landscape architect, you were typically appointed for the life of a project, remained at the table from inception through to the detailed design process, and were still involved when the project shifted through to documentation, tender and construction administration. Being involved at every stage in the project's development allowed nuances within the process to be easily and carefully refined. By moving a bench to the right and slightly rotating it in the actual site, for instance, you might discover a better view than previously imagined during the on-screen digital design process. All in all, the entire project benefited from continuous ownership by the landscape architect.

While I can't pinpoint the moment changes began to occur, projects started to be tendered out, with only parts of the process included in the scope. This was a seismic shift. It became increasingly common for design practices to be appointed to the masterplanning and concept design phase with the knowledge that a re-tender for the detailed design and documentation phase of the project would likely occur. No longer was an individual practice guaranteed authorship of the project for its entirety. As ownership of the design became fractured, the ability to refine the design as the project

progressed became a significantly more complicated matter.

Often, changing circumstances create unforeseen and unintentional outcomes. As a result of changing government funding models and procurement processes over the decades, projects began to be increasingly tendered in parts. Landscape architects involved in the masterplan phase were not guaranteed any continuing authorship over the project when the works were re-tendered in subsequent phases. This has made continual project oversight and vision-keeping far more challenging.

It also raises the issue of authorship and who can maintain moral rights in a project. When one practice undertakes the masterplanning work, another the detailed design and documentation and a third supervises construction, the list of authors increases. Unless there is an amicable relationship on all fronts, design intent can be lost and the design rationale misunderstood. Equally, ideas of authorship become challenging when a constructed project undergoes rectification without the original designers being consulted. How do we understand authorship in this context and at which point is the original practice no longer the primary author?

This issue's guest editors, Jillian Walliss and Heike Rahmann, wanted to address the topic of authorship and copyright, which seems

timely for the profession. As a member of the AILA board, I welcome contributions to the discussion through our member communication platform "Memberscape," where you can help shape our future practice.

In contributing to this edition of Viewpoint, I want to express how honoured I am to take on the role of AILA President, and I pay homage to the institute's presidents and boards past. I have as much energy and passion for the institute and its members now as I did when I first joined the board in 2018, and I take on this position with much seriousness. I would like to congratulate and thank vice president Ben Willsmore and secretary Katie Earle for taking on these positions. While we each play a particular role, we, along with other board members Jasmine Ong and Andy Sharp, continue to serve with collective leadership. We see ourselves as one institute and plan to base many of the organization's future strategic decisions on one simple yet important objective – to ensure AILA remains "fit for the future."

HELPING YOUNG AUSTRALIANS GROW FOR OVER 40 YEARS



Unleash your inner ninja!

The new Ninja Course from *Forpark Australia* is the most customisable commercial ninja course in Australia for adults, teens and older children.

Engage your local community or students and encourage physical play by developing coordination, balance and strength, while having fun!



SCAN ME



www.forparkaust.com.au



THE AUTHORSHIP ISSUE

“An excellent design is where you can’t tell where the landscape architect has been.”

Some version of this statement is often used to describe the spirit of landscape architecture. While it captures aspects of our design practice, this position leads to complications when it comes to questions of authorship, particularly in an increasingly competitive professional environment where designers must demonstrate a range of expertise. Issues of authorship become even more fraught in the contemporary multidisciplinary project. Historically, it has been relatively straightforward to trace the authors of single spatial typologies, such as the garden or the park. But in the multidisciplinary project, which is shaped by ideas, politics and power, questions of design authorship become murky. In this context, landscape architecture’s other much-cited framing as “the art of time” leaves it particularly vulnerable when considered against an explicit architecture output tied to static and object-driven concepts of design authorship.

Too often, the significant contributions of landscape architects are being overlooked in project reviews, design histories and industry awards. For example, a recently published review of a large-scale urban design project in Melbourne acknowledged

the historic role of a landscape architect whose work had been erased by this new design, yet failed to recognize the contemporary landscape designers who had clearly contributed significantly to the design (as evidenced by the accompanying photographs, which showcased more landscape than architecture).

In our own academic work, we have experienced first-hand how the power dynamics of multidisciplinary consultancies work against landscape architecture authorship. A couple of years ago, we undertook a small research project looking at how the engineers, architects and landscape architects collaborated in digital practice to design a large-scale infrastructural project. Interviews with the three disciplines involved confirmed the success of the approach, which we wrote up accordingly. On requesting the use of images, the client sent our paper to the “lead consultant” for sign-off. The principal of the architecture firm (not the architects in the firm who had worked consistently on the project) then proceeded to edit the paper to establish himself as the sole designer of a complex multimillion-dollar project. In his mind, everyone else simply developed his initial (very preliminary) idea and he would not release images unless we changed the paper to follow his narrative. We published the article without images.

On top of denying individual practice contributions, these examples demonstrate how design histories and professional knowledge are skewed based on who is the “gatekeeper” of design authorship. Just today, we read a social media post in which a well-established landscape architect thanked an architect for acknowledging their role in a project that had been profiled by *The Guardian*. With no professional recourse, it seems landscape practitioners are reliant on the goodwill of architects to acknowledge their contribution. Some architects are better than others.

This edition of *Landscape Architecture Australia* was initially provoked by what appears to be a shared professional frustration around recognition. However, as we started to explore ideas of authorship more widely, we realized the value of this lens for thinking afresh about contemporary landscape architecture practice.

A principal tension arising around landscape architecture’s claims to authorship (conceptually and legally) is that authorship is aligned with a static art/design practice. And rarely does our practice fit into this category. For example, a 2008 copyright case in North America concerning the design of a wildflower garden concluded that while the design was original, “a living garden lacks

the kind of authorship and stable fixation normally required to support copyright . . . Simply put, gardens are planted and cultivated, not authored.”¹ According to this ruling, landscape architecture’s ambition to design with living systems would void copyright and authorship.

At the heart of the problem is that all landscape architecture is co-authored with the natural world and is continually shaped by cultural forces. Time is a distinguishing trait of our practice, but an enemy when it comes to recognition of authorship. Drawing on this tension, this edition explores in more depth the inherently collaborative attributes of contemporary landscape practice.

We begin with a focus on new practices of co-creating. We put the spotlight on the seven-year multi-authored process that led to the Yalinguth app featured on the cover. Working across three Aboriginal-led organizations and two universities, and held together by the “glue” of Storyscape, this project demonstrates how creative and technical expertise can aid First Nations communities in sharing their own stories on their own terms.

What happens when a designer co-creates with another species or an environment? We explore how an increasing interest in post-

humanist design is shaping novel approaches to artificial habitats and leading to the recognition of rights for environments, such as rivers and the Moon. An interview with Singapore-based landscape practice Salad Dressing demonstrates how these new ideas can be introduced in the commercial sphere.

We dig more deeply into the culture of co-authorship, exploring for example the all-encompassing influence of the digital as an authoring partner, as both a source of information and a generative design influence. Along the way, we offer landscape practices some therapy and advice for achieving recognition of their work. What are your legal or moral rights for recognition and how should the contemporary multidisciplinary project be reviewed to acknowledge the role of multiple authorship? What consultation should we expect when our designs are altered and changed? And finally, we explore the rise of the identity of Chinese landscape architects, who are emerging from a silent discipline embedded within design institutes into a more diverse set of practices, ideas and knowledge.

In job interviews, candidates are often asked, “What is your greatest weakness?” Various strategies are used to turn a weakness into a positive attribute – for instance, in the classic response, “I work too hard.” While

initiated from a point of frustration, the engaging and inspiring content of this edition demonstrates that our perceived professional weakness of lacking recognition is in fact an indicator of our strength. We are collaborators who position our contributions within a longer and more diverse continuum than a professional canon. In the current environmental and cultural state of the world, the single-authored design idea has little relevance.

– Jillian Walliss and Heike Rahmann,
guest editors

1. Jani McCutcheon, “Natural causes: When author meets nature in copyright law and art. Some observations inspired by Kelley v. Chicago Park District,” *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, vol. 86, no. 2, 2018, 711, scholarship.law.uc.edu/uclr/vol86/iss2/6



GROW YOUR CAREER

BECOME A REGISTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
FEBRUARY REGISTRATION INTAKE NOW OPEN

<https://aila.org.au/membership>



Australian Institute of
Landscape Architects

Co-creating

Increasingly, landscape architects are providing agency to those who have typically been positioned passively in our practice – from Indigenous communities, who for decades have been provided with “solutions,” through to plants, animals, and landscapes.





People, stories and place: Yalinguth

Named for the Woi Wurrung word for “yesterday,” Yalinguth is a site-specific app that immerses listeners in First Nations stories, music and more along a street in Melbourne’s inner-north.

—
Text Janet McGaw

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that
this article contains images and names of deceased persons.*



02

01 — Yalinguth is an immersive audio story app that shares recollections of Gertrude Street, Ngár-go (Fitzroy) by 36 Aboriginal Elders, activists, and community members whose lives have intersected with this urban landscape. Photo: Pip Chandler

02 — The app invites listeners to consider an intricate web of relationships between places, people, stories and moments in time. Photo: Pip Chandler

The chatter and laughter of several hundred people, all overjoyed to be out at a gala dinner after a long season of COVID in Melbourne, quietens as Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Di Kerr takes to the stage. She begins by asking us to look up at the Leonard French stained-glass ceiling above our heads in the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Victoria. She loves this ceiling, she says, because the mosaic of coloured, fragmented glass of different shapes and sizes is an eloquent metaphor for community, where multiplicity and difference is essential for making the whole. She intones an extensive list of Elders and others she wishes to honour before the evening's events can proceed, and concludes by extending her hand of friendship, so we can continue together on the journey of healing people and Country. Relationships of care, rather than hierarchies of power, are at the heart of Indigenous culture and law.

It was a fitting way to begin the 2021 Victorian Premier's Design Awards presentation, held during Melbourne

Design Week on 24 March 2022, at which a project developed by a team that included the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation received a High Commendation. Yalinguth – meaning “yesterday” in Woi Wurrung – is a First Nations, immersive, geo-located, audio story app that shares recollections of Gertrude Street, Ngár-go (Fitzroy) by 36 Elders whose lives have intersected with this urban landscape. The stories were recorded by 20 of their grandchildren, nieces and nephews at ad hoc community recording studios set up at MAYSAR (Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Co-Operative) on the strip since 2019. Yalinguth recounts personal memories of life in the suburb, a significant centre of ferment and protest for the Aboriginal rights movement in Melbourne. In contrast to many urban landscape projects that showcase traditional Aboriginal environmental knowledge, this project tells social and political stories of the impact of invasion and resistance to settler colonization.

The emplaced, polyphonic history is simultaneously warm, intimate, funny, sad, haunting and beautiful, largely as a result of the process of co-authorship and the pace of development and production. The Yalinguth working group of 12, from six organizations, began developing the project seven years ago. Three of the organizations are Aboriginal-led: Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Uncle Colin Hunter and Charley Woolmore); Yarnin' Pictures (Uncle Bobby Nicholls and Rebecca McLean); and the Melbourne Community Indigenous Film Collective (Uncle Robbie Bundle). The other partners are Storyscape (Pip Chandler and Zoë Dawkins); RMIT digital design and animation academics Chris Barker, Max Piantoni and Kate Cawley; and

Melbourne School of Design architecture and landscape architecture academics Janet McGaw – author of this article – and Jillian Walliss – guest editor of this special issue of *Landscape Architecture Australia*. None of us could have developed the project alone. Like the fragments of glass above our heads, all 12 of us played different parts in constructing the puzzle of this narrative landscape.

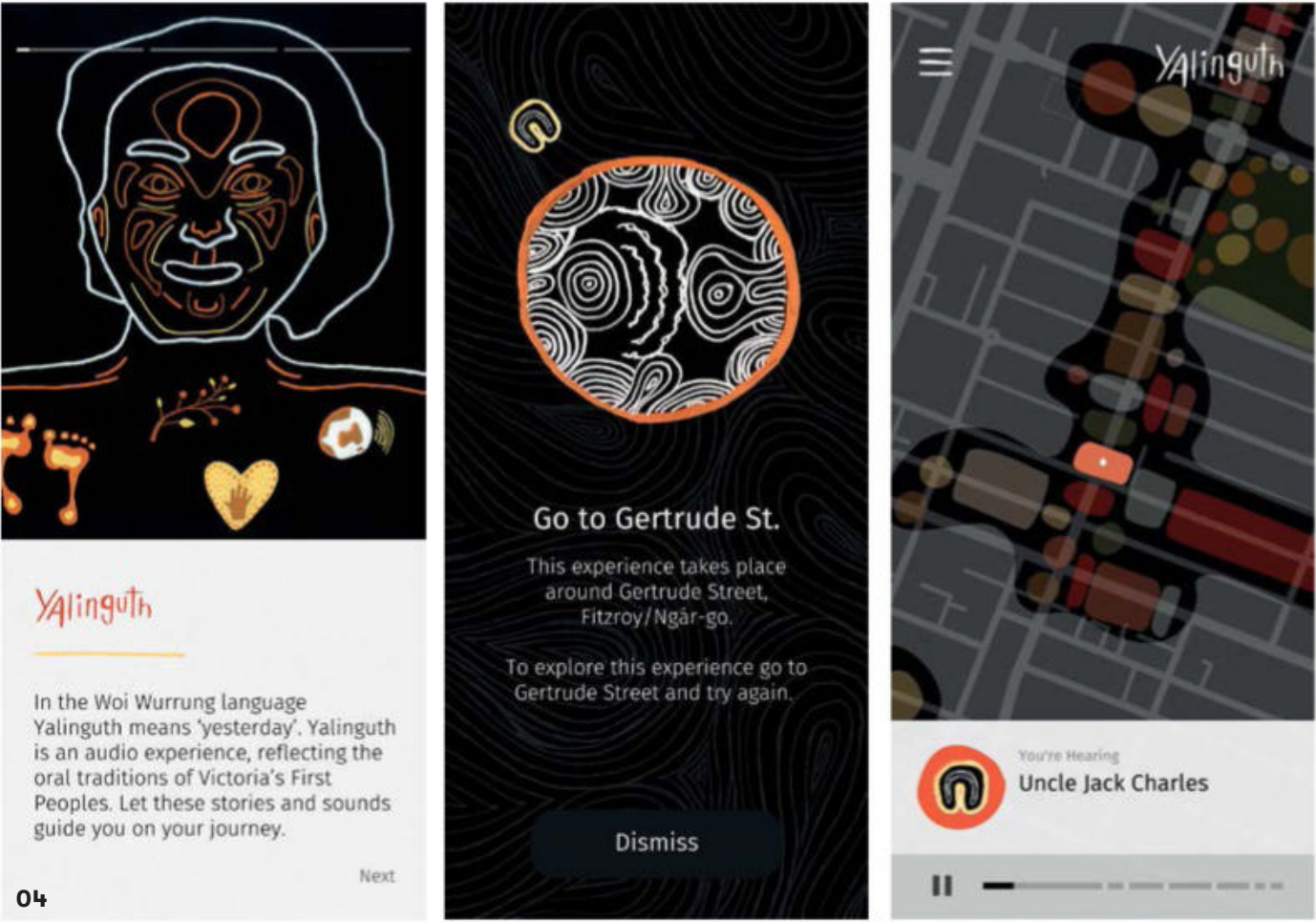
So, how was such a complex array of authors assembled to create one app? Successful engagement between Indigenous communities and design teams requires three key elements: time to develop trust, share ideas and follow appropriate protocols for approval before decisions are made; money to pay First Nations participants for their time and cultural knowledge;

and processes that lean toward self-determination wherever possible. Yalinguth has been in development for around eight years, but it was an alliance born out of previous partnerships, some of which date back more than a decade. The dance was slow at first, while we narrowed down a site, participants and the stories people wanted to share. We were fortunate to receive pilot funding from the University of Melbourne to kick things off. This was followed by a \$300,000 philanthropic grant with no strings attached – a rare gift. A subsequent large Creative Victoria grant plugged the holes, enabling the project to move from proof of concept to fully functioning app. Finally, each of us has known when to lean in to provide support with knowledge, expertise, or plain hard work, and when to



03 — From left to right:
Graham “BJ” Braybon, the late
Uncle Jack Charles and Uncle
Graham “Bootsie” Thorpe
Photo: Chris Hopkins/The Age

Agenda



04 — Screenshots of the Yalinguth mobile app. The design team took great care with the interface, aiming for “clear, direct and friendly” graphics. All icons were made by Aboriginal artists.

05 — Uncle Bobby Nicholls (far R) shares stories with a group of listeners gathered on Gertrude Street in 2019. Photo: Pip Chandler

06 — As part of the recording process for Yalinguth, a number of young people interviewed the late Uncle Archie Roach (centre). Photo: Becka Mezzatesta

disappear. Sometimes, the most important design work is simply to set up a process.

Uncle Bobby, Uncle Colin, Uncle Robbie, Aunty Denise McGuinness and Aunty Rieo Ellis gathered the community, while Storyscape took the lead in developing the methods for equipping First Nations participants to tell and record their Ngár-go (Fitzroy) stories themselves. Storyscape is an arts, community and advocacy partnership established by Zöe Dawkins and Pip Chandler. Pip and Zöe drew on their expertise in community arts, filmmaking and media production to devise creative, skill-building, community workshops where the uncles and aunties gathered to yarn, and young people were trained to make high-quality recordings. The warmth and intimacy of the stories in the app are a testament to the process. Storyscape also devised and ran design competitions for the visuals, open to First Nations artists. The work of the winning artists, Larna Massari and Graham “BJ” Braybon, has been used in

the logo, app visuals, posters and footpath stencils. The community’s sense of pride and ownership has grown with every event, from the trial run of the app in December 2020, through the soft launch demanded by COVID lockdowns in 2021 to the NAIDOC week storytelling at the Builders Arms Hotel and the official launch at Atherton Gardens during the Gertrude Street projection Festival in July 2022. The enthusiasm with which it has been received by the larger community has been overwhelming, evidenced by the vast traffic through the socials, international coverage in the global Atlas of the Future¹ and prime-time news coverage after the launch alongside the Garma Festival of Traditional Cultures.

It is still rare for this triumvirate of time, money and partnerships that evolve into community ownership to align in built environment design projects. Typically, deadlines loom large, dollars are tight and First Nations groups may be stakeholders or users, but the paying clients are more

often than not local or state government departments or non-Indigenous landowners. But take a moment to reconsider. There are an ever-growing number of policies and Reconciliation Action Plans that articulate statements of commitment by organizations to support better partnerships with First Nations stakeholders, particularly on projects in the public realm. Landscape architects working in public space design can leverage these to be better allies, ensuring policies don’t remain empty rhetoric, lost on websites or forgotten by staff. Yalinguth shows how truth-telling can start right now in the public sphere, if designers follow community interests and lend their creative and technical expertise to First Nations communities so they can share their own stories on their own terms.

1. See Atlas of the Future website, atlasofthefuture.org/project/yalinguth (accessed 17 August 2022).



05



06

Photo: Carlton Gardens



Shaping the future of heritage

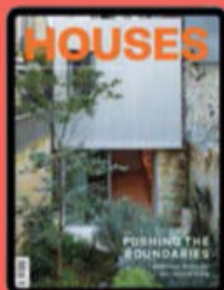
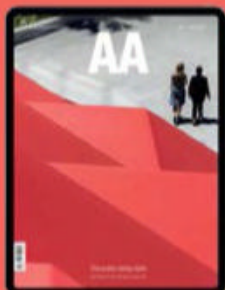
Melbourne | Sydney | Canberra

Let's work together
gml.com.au

**Enjoy Houses, Artichoke,
Architecture Australia and
Landscape Architecture Australia
anytime, anywhere.**

Subscribe today

architecturemedia.com/digital



Italianate House by Renato D'Ettorre Architects. Photography by Justin Alexander.



Authenticity and authority: Country as co-author

How non-Indigenous landscape architects can build mutually nourishing relationships with Country and its First Peoples through the authority of authorship – and leave the profession and the landscape better than they found them.

—
Text Jock Gilbert, Sophia Pearce and Tom Flugge

02



01 — Documentation meets experience, and authorship undergoes mediation, with Charles Massy, Uncle Barry Pearce and Jock Gilbert (left to right). Photo: Tom Flugge

02 — The billy is often the starting point for co-authorship. Photo: Tom Flugge

*itha murra*¹

The word “author” arose in Middle English to describe “a person who invents or causes something.” The term derives from Old French and is related to the words “authentic” and “authority.” This article is co-authored by three people. We all equally shared the role of “inventing” or “causing” it: it is equally the result of the contributions of all three of us – drawn out orally, textually and through the medium of drawing, over time. Co-authoring is not merely writing.

First Nations people talk about Country in the same way they would talk about a person: they speak to Country, sing to Country, visit Country, worry about Country, feel sorry for Country, and long for Country.²

Non-Indigenous practitioners are now (mostly) comfortable with the notion of acknowledging Country – Country being an understanding of the world around us, which also produces us. Often for non-Indigenous people, this includes an acknowledgment that a certain event or undertaking is being conducted on unceded or stolen land. The acknowledgment is offered in response to the welcome – we are acknowledging that we

are on someone else’s land and responding to the generosity of the welcome afforded us by the Traditional Owners of that land. Such a welcome has stipulations and protocols attached; N’Arwee’t Carolyn Briggs describes the Kulin welcome – “Womindjeka” – as “Welcome to my Country, to my home; please state your intent, your purpose for coming and you are welcome.”³

From this, we can make two assertions. The first is that Country is an ever-present co-author, an especially salient point for landscape architects to consider in relation to both textual and built projects. The second is that being on Country (as we all are) is a relational condition – we have a relationship to Country whether we are “black, white or brindle.” Like any relationship, this relationship demands attention to protocols: ways of going about things that ensure the relationship is simultaneously nurturing and nurtured. As non-Indigenous practitioners, our relationship to Country is constructed through our relationship to Traditional Owners and Indigenous knowledge holders. The protocols around this include adherence to principles of reciprocity and respect; this includes respect for the value of Indigenous knowledge and knowledge holders as well as respect for the diversity of Indigenous



03 — Authority of maps: Uncle Barry Pearce at Interpretive Wonderings, Culpra Station in 2016. Photo: Campbell Drake

04 — Authorship as driver for project: Culpra Station regeneration projects. Image: Tom Flugge

culture by acknowledging and following regional cultural understandings.⁵

Reflecting on this brings us to the question of authorship and authority. Respect for the value of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous knowledge holders requires respect for authority – establishing relationships with the right people who have the authority to speak for Country. In doing so, those people and that Country inherently become “co-authors” of the project or text. Understanding that Indigenous culture is not a homogenous entity, respect for the diversity inherent in Indigenous culture requires an acknowledgment and attention to regional cultural understandings. This also requires attention to diversity within communities, within regions – the ability to hear and give voice to grassroots concerns.⁶ This broadens the concept of authorship – and indeed of authority. Authority must be sought from the right authority or authorities. It must be done in such a way that the authority of Indigenous knowledge in each and every project or text is recognized and amplified. The relationship between authorship and authority then becomes reciprocal – it is mutually nourishing. Mutual nourishment is a condition of Country evocatively described by Deborah Bird Rose.

Authorship is also related to authenticity, as we can see when we examine the etymology of both words. Authenticity is often a precursor to establishing a new relationship – and as with any relationship, a relationship with Indigenous knowledge must be authentic. This need for authenticity again implies the need for respect, particularly in terms of respecting regional and community diversity.

In *Reading the Country: Introduction to Nomadology*, a book co-authored by Morocco-born Berber painter Krim Benterrak; Paddy Roe, an Elder of the Goolarabooloo people of Western Australia’s Kimberley region; and ethnographer Stephen Muecke, this point is made. In their description of Indigenous knowledge from the Kimberley region in Western Australia, the centrality of the Western notion of the single authorial voice is contrasted with that of the Aboriginal storytelling method in which “a group of men or women gather together collectively to produce the text.” This contrast is further underlined by noting that if the story is not being told on the particular piece of Country to which it pertains, then it can only ever be partially told – Country asserts its authorship. In this way, “authority is [also] deferred” as the story “disappears over the horizon into



ancient fishtrap infrastructure



native bush foods



cultural weaving practices



ancient Aboriginal fireplaces

04

Agenda



05 — Authority of formality:
Uncle Barry Pearce at
Interpretive Wonderings,
Culpra Station, 2016.
Photo: Jock Gilbert



06 — Authority of informality:
Interpretive Wonderings,
Culpra Station, 2016. Photo:
Jock Gilbert

man's Country." In that case, authority for the knowledge around that story must be sought and established in and on that Country, thereby deepening authenticity (or specificity) as we might understand it in landscape terms.

The question of authority is a central concern in relation to authorship. Co-authorship should be a given on a continent where we acknowledge that the majority of us are always on the unceded land of another. The principles of the First Peoples of our continent require us to seek and understand authority through diversity. That seeking must be authentic, rather than simply a bureaucratic or box-ticking or exercise.

When authority is engaged relationally and authentically, co-authorship becomes the default position. Co-authorship of both built and textual works, therefore, should be a given for design professions – particularly those that take as their medium those very unceded lands to which we have referred previously. In recognizing this, we, as designers, can then ensure that we are building authority (the diverse authority of the Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous knowledge holders of this continent) authentically into each and every project we undertake. Therein lies the potential for the landscape architecture profession to remake

itself and to offer deeper and more authentic leadership in national discourse. In engaging authentically in its projects, the profession of landscape architecture will be taking its first steps towards a practice of reconciliation. Reconciliation, after all, as Uncle Barry Pearce of the Culpra Milli Aboriginal Corporation reminds us, is "about knowledge and understanding ... it's also about love and kindness in what we feel, and what we want to teach the next generation."⁷

Authenticity is often a precursor to establishing a new relationship – and as with any relationship, a relationship with Indigenous knowledge must be authentic.

-
1. "Many hands" in the language of the Barkandji people.
 2. Deborah Bird Rose, *Nourishing Terrains: Australian Aboriginal Views of Landscape and Wilderness* (Canberra: Australian Heritage Commission, 1996). For further discussion of the relationship between Country and landscape, see Jock Gilbert and Sophia Pearce, "The landscape of Country," *Landscape Architecture Australia*, May 2019, landscapeaustralia.com/articles/the-landscape-of-country.
 3. N'Arwee't Carolyn Briggs, personal and public communications.
 4. Sophia Pearce, personal and public communications.
 5. Russell Kennedy, Meghan Kelly, Jefa Greenaway and Brian Martin, *International Indigenous Design Charter: Protocols for sharing Indigenous knowledge in professional design practice* (Geelong: Deakin University, 2018).
 6. This is now playing out in national conversations around the Voice to Parliament and the Makarrata – the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
 7. Uncle Barry Pearce, quoted in Bension Siebert and Jennifer Douglas, "Honouring Aboriginal history and mourning an atrocity at the Mount Dispersion massacre site," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, 26 May 2022, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-26/mount-dispersion-massacre-site-honoured/101039452> (accessed 30 September 2022).

Bringing communities together in public space

With Christie's range of Australian barbecues, cooking and sharing food together in the outdoors has never been easier.



01



02

Christie manufactures the original, iconic Australian barbecue designed explicitly for cooking in shared public spaces. Its fixed electric and gas grills offer a safe, sustainable alternative to open fires and disposable barbecue options.

The experience of cooking and sharing food brings communities together and promotes healthy outdoor living. Since 1965, more than 50,000 of Christie's durable, energy-efficient grills have been installed worldwide in parks and urban environments.

Christie is a leader in barbecue technology and design innovation. Their ICON cabinet's DDA-compliant design provides universal access, enabling seated and standing users to use the cooktop. The ICON meets high standards for sustainability, inclusivity and occupational health and safety and is made of 100 percent recyclable materials.

Christie cooktops are natively intelligent. A built-in controller constantly monitors performance and produces error notifications in real-time for easy diagnostics, maintenance scheduling and proactive repairs. You can combine the ICON with an award-winning standard Christie cooktop – or create a smart barbecue with an IoT networked CC2-i Cooktop.

The latest sensor technology enables the Christie CC2-i Cooktop to transmit data to the Christie GoACCESS platform. Scheduled reporting and real-time data communicated via email or SMS provide relevant information and total control of barbecue assets.

The ICON and CC2-i Cooktop with GoACCESS platform provide an end-to-end solution to managing public space assets, reducing operating costs and guaranteeing the ultimate cooking experience for barbecue users.

01 – Christie's cooktops feature built-in controllers that continually monitor performance in real-time for easy diagnostics. Photo: Supplied.

02 – Christie's fixed electric and gas grills offer a safe, sustainable alternative to open fires and disposable barbecues. Photo: Supplied.

For more information:
E sales@dachristie.com
W dachristie.com
P (03) 9708 2999

CHRISTIE

Shifting grounds

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria reflect on more than a decade of joint management and the growing impact of this co-authored approach to the way land is understood, managed and designed.

Text and interview Jen Lynch

01 — The Lake Tyers (Bung Yarnda) Camping and Access Strategy (LTCAS) was undertaken as a joint management project between Parks Victoria and Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and encourages understanding of culture and Country in the design of a natural landscape. Photo: courtesy Parks Victoria and Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation

The lineage of landscape and the lineage of authorship overlap at a curious point, which is around the notion of property: land was first transformed into property in 17th century England and “landscape” emerged to mirror this legal transformation of ownership and space¹; ideas and knowledge, including creative works, were transformed into intellectual property in the 18th century through adaptation of these same laws². These transformations paralleled and supported the emergence of capitalism in modern Europe, sparking a destructive reordering of the world that extended globally via colonization. The earliest “landscape gardeners” worked within these emerging relationships between space, ideas, and economy, establishing an understanding of practice as client-focused service, landscape as “site” (property), and design as professionally authored work (intellectual property). For contemporary landscape architects, practice continues to focus value within property boundaries³, organize itself around client-generated projects⁴, privilege “expert” knowledge⁵, and focus on the delivery of “finished works” rather than ongoing, community-driven processes⁶. Acknowledging our colonial context and our profession’s lineage but feeling bound by these fundamentals poses a complex ethical challenge for Australian landscape practice.

For over a decade, Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners and Parks Victoria have developed shared practices underpinned by joint management arrangements. These practices are significant in that they challenge property-based understandings of both land and authorship – recognition of land rights recasts site as Country and opens it to shared

governance, shifting the work’s values and outcomes. These include: Traditional Owners’ increasing land management capacity and reconnection with knowledge of Country; Parks Victoria’s growing capacity to “reframe” its understanding of the land it jointly manages and its role; the development of evolving management and design approaches that reflect cultural values and foreground Gunaikurnai knowledge; an expanding shift in the public’s understanding of land as Country; and the strategy’s intensifying impact beyond the scope of the management plan itself.

In Victoria, joint management arrangements are established between Traditional Owner groups with recognized native title and the state government under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic), which “recognises the ongoing connection of Traditional Owners to their traditional Country, and empowers them, in partnership with the Victorian Government, to actively participate in the management of land and natural resources within their traditional Country.” A Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) steps this legal recognition towards joint management, with the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 (Vic) providing the basis for a Traditional Owner Land Management Board, which guides strategic direction within the lands overseen through the partnership.

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and Parks Victoria have managed 10 national parks and reserves across 47,000 hectares of Gunaikurnai Country since 2010. In its twenty-five-year timeframe, the joint management agreement aims to: reinforce the Gunaikurnai

community’s connection to Country and culture; contribute to reconciliation, social and self-determination for the Gunaikurnai people; foster the wider community’s respect for Gunaikurnai heritage, connection to Country and right to self-determination; and establish healthier, more resilient parks through the integration of Gunaikurnai knowledge into land management approaches⁷. These aspirations translate into land management practices and design projects within the 10 parks and reserves, which are charted out annually by GLaWAC and Parks Victoria toward the achievement of longer term outcomes involving interconnected forms of change for people (skills, training, employment, wellbeing, education), culture (heritage, values, cultural practices), Country (sustainable environmental outcomes) and working together (governance structure and partnership).

Since Parks Victoria’s first joint management agreement with GLaWAC, three additional Traditional Owner groups within the state have developed joint management plans, while another three groups have partnered with Parks Victoria through cooperative management agreements.

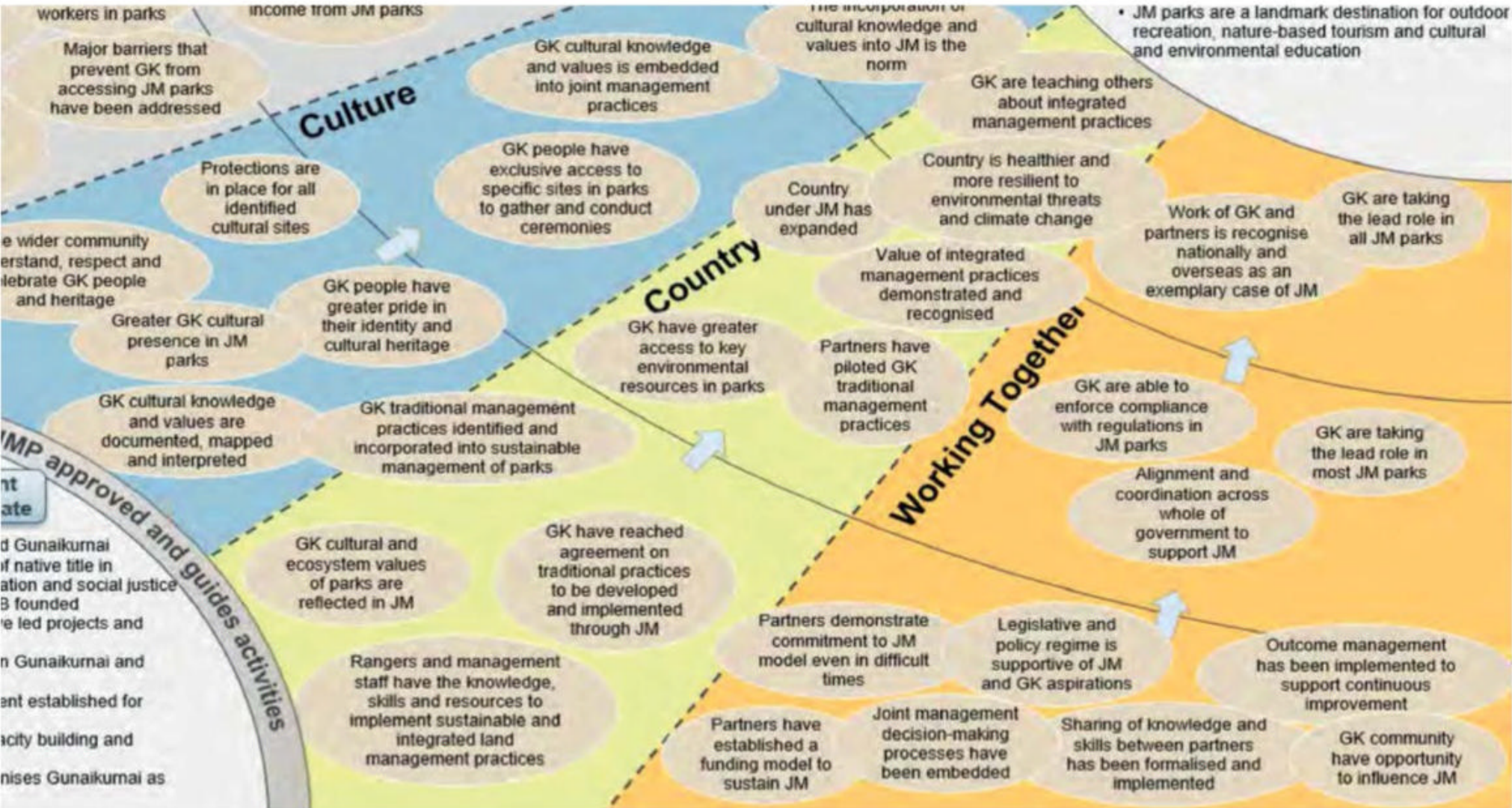
The longevity of Gunaikurnai joint management allows the co-authors to reflect upon the evolution of projects and practices under the model and the outcomes realized through a partnered approach. The following are excerpts from an interview with Rob Farnham (Manager of the Gunaikurnai Rangers, GLaWAC), Matt Holland (Regional Program Coordinator Gunaikurnai, Parks Victoria) and Nick Loschiavo (Senior Precinct Planner, Parks Victoria).

On two-way capacity building:

Rob Farnham – At GLaWAC, the joint management plan has given community members the opportunity to get through the door, especially with work. We’ve been going for 12 years now and when I first started, there were probably 11 of us staff members. Now, there’s over 50 more staff members – that’s a great thing for our community ... Over time, we’ve started learning more and more, and sharing knowledge and gaining knowledge. We have a lot of mentors: Parks Victoria does a lot with our team around the project side, and we do archaeological work and cultural mapping with Monash University, and threatened species management with DELWP [Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning]. I think we will probably see GLaWAC staff members who have the opportunity to step up into roles in Parks Victoria as well.

Matt Holland – From a Parks Victoria perspective, it’s about building an understanding and a capacity within our staff to reframe how we look at landscapes and how we approach things. It’s about knowing that it’s not just ours to look after – that we need to bring GLaWAC into the conversation because we’re doing this together now. It’s not up to Parks Victoria to come up with a plan; we’re doing it in a joint way and need to ensure that we bring each other along for the journey ... It’s about reframing what we’re doing and Gunaikurnai cultural values informing what we’re doing rather than having this as an afterthought. When it’s all said and done, we’re managing to protect rather than getting permission to cause harm. It’s not understanding cultural values as one area or some artefacts scattered somewhere; the whole landscape has cultural value for us.

Nick Loschiavo – From a design perspective, I think what’s new is non-Aboriginal people listening. What joint management offers us collectively is the ability to listen to Traditional Owners on Country.





02 — The Joint Management Outcomes Framework in the Gunaikurnai and Victorian Government Joint Management Plan. The plan guides the Gunaikurnai people and the Victorian Government in jointly managing the 10 public parks and reserves that were transferred to the Gunaikurnai in accordance with the Gunaikurnai Recognition and Settlement Agreement of 2010. Photo: courtesy Parks Victoria and Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation

03 — The LTCAS aims to increase opportunities for Gunaikurnai people to connect with Country, foster employment and economic development opportunities and build their capacity and skills to take a central role in joint management with the other management partners. Photo: Anne-Marie Pisani

On seeing and understanding landscape as Country:

Nick Loschiavo – A key word that Matt mentioned was “reframing,” which allows Traditional Owners to lead the conversation. Whether we’re designing a bollard or a campground, we understand that the context is Country.

Matt Holland – One of the biggest things is to understand the areas that we’re managing better and what values they have as Country. Some cultural values are known but a lot of Country hasn’t been surveyed or looked at for a long time, so one of the main goals is to do what we’re calling cultural mapping. This involves archaeological surveys (we have a memorandum of understanding with Monash University so we can work together to use their expertise) and working with community to get oral histories.

Nick Loschiavo – The cultural mappings allow us to see what only Traditional Owners are able to see and, hopefully, we can learn. In the form of both the cultural narrative and the language that’s used to describe things, it changes the way we see. And it gives us more meaning in terms of the design response.

Rob Farnham – Identifying what’s in the landscape and its values through the cultural mapping helps us, as Gunaikurnai rangers, to identify what we want to work on and protect within those areas as well.

Matt Holland – One of the big goals in the joint management plan is that the broader community also gains an understanding of the Country that they’re on. We’re doing some other projects around interpretation plans for different parks using the cultural information that has been gathered and generously shared by GLaWAC. It’s about broadening an understanding of the significance of the place that you’re on and understanding what it means to the Gunaikurnai community. Language is a big thing and we try to reintroduce language so we can start to understand places and their significance.



On shifts in practice to reflect Gunaikurnai culture, knowledge and leadership:

Rob Farnham – Through joint management, we now get the opportunity to put what we want on Country and in the landscape. We’re getting to the point now where we’re designing stuff on Country and having that opportunity to make decisions on Country first. Changing Country based on how we want it to look empowers myself and this new generation that is going to come through GLaWAC. They get to make these decisions about what happens on Country – I think that’s the most important thing since we got joint management.

Nick Loschiavo– Our responsibility is to the Traditional Owners: understanding the joint management; understanding how they see Country through the cultural mapping; having the conversation on the ground before we do any of the work; having Traditional Owners review the brief in the governance and in the assessments embedded into the project. It’s about working out how we can really partner so that there’s joint management and co-design through every part of the process.

04 – The Glasshouse Camping area in Lake Tyers State Park. Photo: courtesy Parks Victoria and Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation

05 – Signage at Lake Tyers State Park values and promotes Gunaikurnai culture and knowledge. Photo: courtesy Parks Victoria and Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation

06 – The LTCAS aims to ensure that the values and assets of Lake Tyers State Park are protected and conserved through an equitable partnership between the Victorian Government and GLaWAC. Photo: Rob Willersdorf

On impacts beyond the management plan's scope:

Rob Farnham – There's a lot that happens outside of the nine parks and the one reserve that are currently joint-managed – a lot of training and a lot of work with different stakeholders – because it is still Gunaikurnai Country. And I think it's now [being recognized] that anything that happens outside of the parks is still on our Country ... A lot of the people that we work with might be doing something off one of our parks, but we still get an invite to come across and have input. It's a great opportunity for our team to get out, to see more of the countryside and to learn on Country as well, rather than just sticking to those 10 parks that we drive in and work in all the time.

Matt Holland – GLaWAC and Rob are working with East Gippsland Shire and other land management agencies, so while they don't have a specific joint management arrangement with those parties, they're trying to manage things in a similar way in the sense of that reframing. Hopefully, through the renegotiation of the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, more areas will become joint-managed and that will continue the growth and broader understanding.

Nick Loschiavo – That's the promise that a joint management plan has: that it bleeds into everything else and that everything relates to Country. Parks Victoria, DELWP, the Catchment Management Authorities, the power authorities, wind farmers – anybody who's putting in any infrastructure or thinking about planning is starting to look to the joint management plan and Gunaikurnai for guidance.

The outcomes achieved by GLaWAC and Parks Victoria over 10 years through shared governance inspire us to imagine what institutional change and its impact might look like in other contexts, as well as the types of relearning landscape architects might need to decentre themselves as authors, shifting their role to support and extend community-led processes.

1. D. Cosgrove, "Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol 10 no 1, 1985, 45.
2. M. Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 7.
3. H. Jacobs, "Claiming the Site: Ever evolving social-legal conceptions of ownership and property" in A. Kahn and J. Burns (eds), *Site Matters: Strategies for uncertainty through planning and design* (Milton, Taylor and Francis Group, 2020), 14.
4. B. Fleming, "Design and the Green New Deal," *Places*, 2018.
5. P. Horrigan and M. Bose, "Towards democratic professionalism in landscape architecture" in S. Egoz, K. Jørgensen and D. Ruggeri (eds), *Defining Landscape*

Democracy: A Path to Spatial Justice (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2018), 74.

6. S. Costanza-Chock, *Design Justice: Community-led practices to build the worlds we need* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020), 84.
7. Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board and State of Victoria, *Gunaikurnai and Victorian Government Joint Management Plan* (Bairnsdale, Vic: Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board, 2018), 30.



Bespoke design tools for landscape architects

Urbis partners with technology integrator Nexsys to enhance their BIM capabilities



Landscape architects and urban designers can play a more active role on BIM projects by adopting bespoke design technologies like Environment for Revit.

Environment is a toolset that offers solutions for all phases of a landscape design workflow, transforming Revit from a general platform into a fit-for-purpose, immensely valuable tool for landscape professionals. Environment combines industry-standard core technology and bespoke industry-specific tools inside Revit's interface, dramatically increasing design and collaboration efficiency.

The Urban Design and Landscape Architecture team at Urbis develops urban strategies and public realm designs that create destinations to live in and work, that inspire and reward. The team used

BIM software in the design of projects such as the Queens Wharf Integrated Resort Development and the South Bank Masterplan in Brisbane. Environment for Revit enabled Urbis to customize Revit for use in all phases of the landscape design workflow.

Urbis BIM and CAD manager Sherman Powell says: "As an experienced Revit user myself, landscape architectural elements can be a little tricky to model in Autodesk Revit software. Environment for Revit has definitely taken away the tedious and painstaking landscape modelling tasks and made it easier to produce landscape models in [less] time using Autodesk Revit software."

Nexsys provides support services to Urbis, including customized training and guidance regarding hardware and software solutions for landscape architecture design.

01 — Nexsys provides crucial support that enables Revit's landscape-specific features to improve design outcomes. Image: Urbis

02 — Nexsys supports Urbis in order to expand Revit's industry-standard core technology with the Environment toolset for landscape architects. Image: Urbis

For more information:
E info@nexsysit.com.au
W nexsysit.com.au
P 1300 733 010

NEXSYS



Lunar musings

As we move beyond the Earth to fulfil human needs, we have the opportunity to set up best practice from the beginning by declaring the rights of the Moon.

—
Text Thomas Gooch

Agenda



02



03

01 — Westward view taken by Apollo 10 across Apollo Landing Site 3 in the Central Bay on 18 May 1969. Since then, scientists have discovered evidence of water ice on the surface of the moon's polar regions. Photo: NASA/JSC.

02 — The Greenline project is collaborating with Birrarung (Yarra River), which has been declared a “single living entity,” to revitalize the city. Photo: Slava Abramovitch.

03 — In 2011 in Ecuador – the first place in the world to include the rights of nature in its constitution – a court ruled that the Vilcabamba River's rights were violated by road construction. Photo: Arabsalam, CC BY-SA 4.0.

04 — A key scientific goal of Apollo 17, the final mission of NASA's Apollo program, was to collect rock samples from the Serenitatis Basin rim. Photo: NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University.

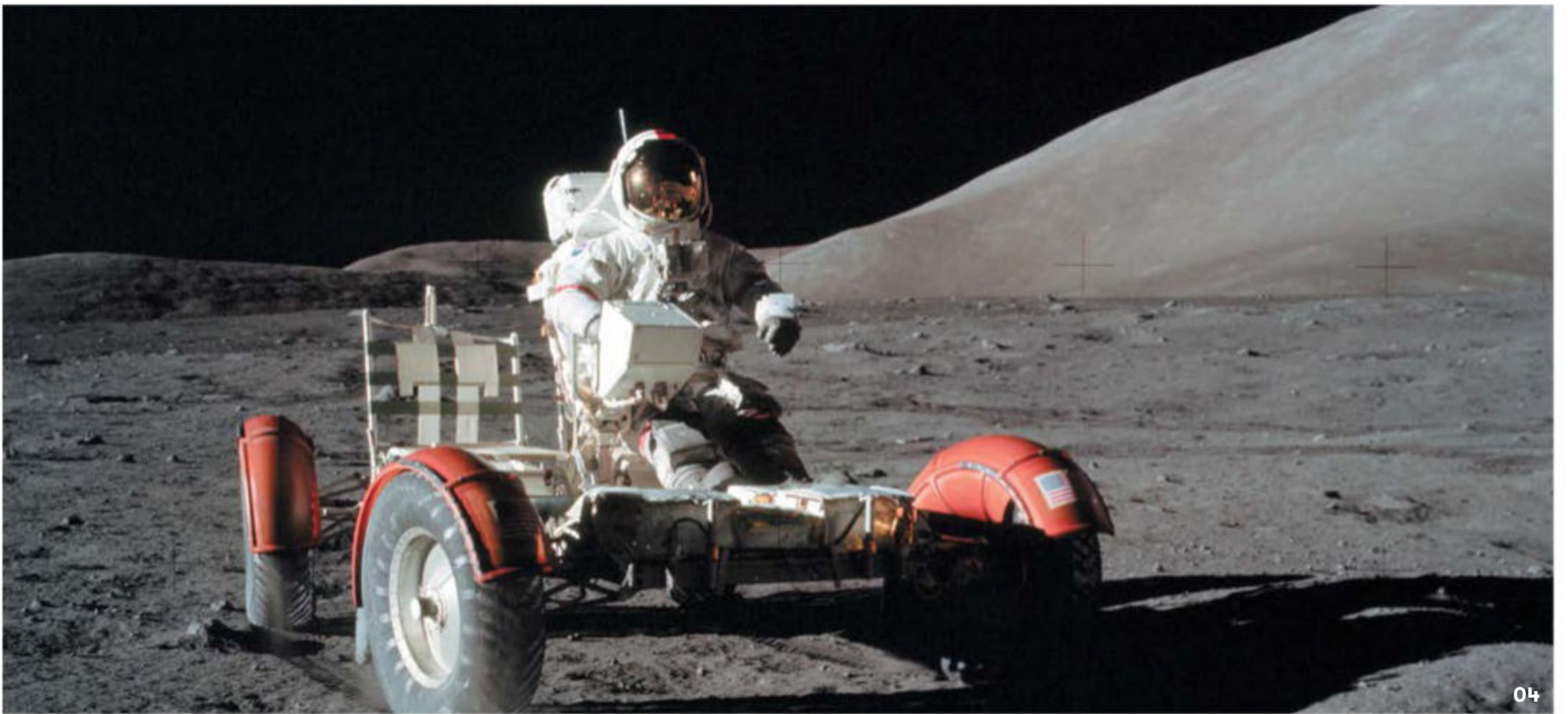
In February 2021, Alice Gorman (space archaeologist), Ceridwen Dovey (space writer), Michelle Maloney and Mari Margil (earth lawyers) and I (landscape architect) came together to write the Declaration of the Rights of the Moon.¹ To give the Moon rights may seem a radical suggestion, but it was clear, when talking with Michelle and Mari, that the Zeitgeist was changing in regard to the rights of nature. In 2008, Ecuador declared a new constitution to give rights to nature, and there are now 409 rights of nature initiatives globally.² It is clear that the Western legal system has been largely set up to regulate the destruction of nature. This challenge to the status quo moves the conversation toward nature having its own seat at the table, as a collaborator in the decision-making process – with rights.

As a discipline, landscape architecture largely attracts pro-nature individuals who proceed to shape, reshape and heal varying layers of landscape. Landscape architects know what it means to inhabit place, and have a deep knowledge and understanding of the environmental systems we disrupt when

designing cities. So, when considering the Moon, it made sense to me that we set up a new environmental relationship between it and any burgeoning human lunar presence. We could view this declaration as a kind of soft technology. If the Moon had rights and was a collaborator, what would it mean for advances in hardware and rocket or robot technology? What would our relationship to lunar systems be?

The declaration is perhaps (at a stretch) akin to the James Webb Space Telescope. The largest optical telescope in space, Webb has recently enabled us to see fainter galaxies than ever before and to better understand the formation of the universe. Perhaps the declaration will enable us to see deeper into the universe by shifting our current perspective and catalyzing new ways of seeing, measuring and acting.

If you work in the New Space industry, whether in a private company, in government policy or in academia, you might be thinking: *Pah! What a load of hogwash.* But I would challenge the reader to consider how changing Western law to give nature its own



rights is a step forward for humanity. It sets up a framework to shift from the unregulated destruction of the environment toward a situation where nature is granted the opportunity to flourish.

How might we move beyond Earth's gravity and become a multi-planetary species without causing mass destruction along the way? The answer is, potentially, by giving explicit rights to nature. Even though the Moon has been considered a "dead" planet since the Apollo missions in the 1960s and 1970s (an understanding that sets the conditions for mass destruction), a new understanding that it may still be alive³ (geologically speaking) has since emerged. Geological status aside, the Moon also harbours water at its poles, has peaks of eternal light, craters of eternal shadow and asteroid seasons. We don't yet know how human habitation will impact these systems. So why not start with an awareness of the lunar landscape in order that we might integrate and collaborate with it (at the risk of leaving the space actors reeling at what this might mean for payload launch costs and return on capital investment)? Could the

Declaration of the Rights of the Moon set up best practice at the beginning, even filling in missing law in the Outer Space Treaty and the Moon Agreement?

Back on Earth, in 2021, we began one of Victoria's biggest revitalization capital works projects to bring the city back to life after two years of harsh COVID-19 lockdowns. Costing \$300 million, the Greenline project on the north bank of Birrarung (Yarra River) aims to connect the CBD back to the water and provide 4.5 kilometres of uninterrupted pedestrian connections along the riverbank. The City of Melbourne's Ernst and Young-prepared business case for the project (released in September 2022) projects a \$740-million-dollar net benefit to the city over the next 20 years, the creation of more than 6,400 jobs by 2042, and \$1.2 billion dollars in total economic benefit for Melbourne's economy.⁴

In 2017, the Victorian government declared the Yarra River a "single living entity." A significant new legislation called the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act 2017* now aligns the Traditional

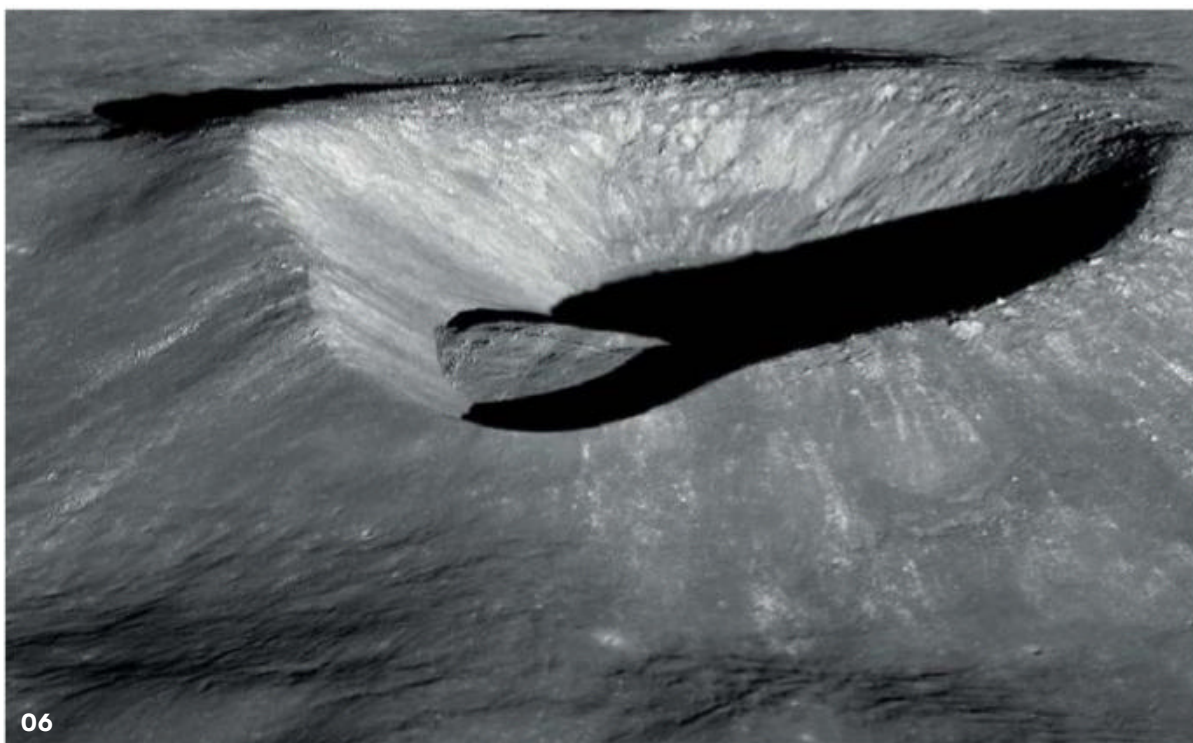
Given the establishment of the Artemis Accords and the potential mining of the Moon in the coming 80 years, will landscape architects become involved in this lunar conversation?

Agenda



05 — View from the Apollo 11 spacecraft taken on 20 July 1969 showing the Earth rising above the moon's horizon. Photo: NASA/JSC.

06 — We don't know how human habitation will impact the Moon's systems, including forms such as the Ryder Crater. Photo: courtesy NASA.



Custodians' values with the management of the waterway and its lands. Under the act, the Birrarung Council was established as an independent voice to advise the state government and to advocate for the river.

This legislation, through which a governing body reports to a state body on behalf of a living entity, makes a profound contribution to the global consciousness. And with the Greenline project looking to collaborate with this living entity in the process of revitalizing a major capital city ... the Declaration of the Rights of the Moon is starting to look a bit less radical.

Interestingly, the Yarra River Protection Act calls for the Birrarung Council to include landscape architecture among its diverse disciplinary members. Given the 2020 establishment of the Artemis Accords (a framework for creating a “safe and transparent environment which facilitates exploration, science and commercial activities” in outer space⁵) and the potential mining of the Moon in the coming 80 years, will landscape architects become involved in this lunar conversation? And will the new space industry welcome progressive law to guide actions? How will we proceed? With innovation – moving nature from an entity with minority status to one with explicit rights – or with the same extractive economic model that inadvertently causes “mass destruction” of place?

-
1. For the full text of the Declaration of the Rights of the Moon, see earthlaws.org.au/moon-declaration.
 2. Alex Putzer et al., “Putting the rights of nature on the map: A quantitative analysis of rights of nature initiatives across the world,” 13 June 2022, *Journal of Maps*, doi.org/10.1080/17445647.2022.2079432 (accessed 30 November 2022).
 3. “Is the Moon still alive?”, NASA Science, 9 November 2006, science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2006/09nov_moonalive (accessed 30 November 2022).
 4. “Business case stacks up for the Greenline Project,” City of Melbourne, media release, 3 September 2022, melbourne.vic.gov.au/news-and-media/Pages/Business-case-stacks-up-for-the-Greenline-Project--.aspx (accessed 30 November 2022).
 5. For the full text of the Artemis Accords, see nasa.gov/specials/artemis-accords/index.html (accessed 30 November 2022).

Top-notch, Eco-friendly Landscape Plants

Ozbreed Green Life is an environmental green life company that was established in 2002, specialising in breeding landscape gardening plants.

Improving air quality in our traffic dense cities is an important issue with many companies and government bodies searching for affordable and effective solutions. However, recent research from the UK suggests that one solution has been under our noses all along: **plants**.

Roadside pollution consists of vehicle exhaust (particulate matter plus harmful gases), dust and other small particles from tyres, brakes etc.

Researchers have analysed levels of particulates trapped on leaf surfaces and the heavy metals absorbed into the leaves.

The plants from Ozbreed on this page exhibit traits of dense foliage combined with hairy and/or relatively rough leaves making them excellent choices for roadside plantings, and pollution control.



Blue Horizon™ *Eremophila glabra prostrate* 'EREM1' PBR



Better John™ *Callistemon viminalis* 'LJ1' PBR



Blue Gem™ *Westringia hybrid* 'WES03' PBR



Yalba™ *Imperata cylindrica*

Agenda



01 — A digital model of a large old tree – colours indicate branches preferred by birds. Such modelling can help landscape architects design for and with nonhuman lifeforms. Image: Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland.

01

Tree designers and bird clients

Using more-than-human design as a theoretical framework and artificial habitats for arboreal wildlife as a case study, Deep Design Lab explores approaches for better inclusion of nonhuman contributions.

—
Text Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland

Human redesign of landscapes often leads to dramatic losses. These losses are grossly unfair, with some suffering more than others. The harms are often inversely proportionate to societal power, with nonhuman lifeforms at the worst disadvantage. In response, this article reconsiders design as a communal activity that is not unique to humans. All lifeforms including plants, animals, and bacteria can self-design, affect others, act as niche constructors and ecosystem engineers. Human-driven design can produce huge effects but remains a component within this picture.

Seeking ways to co-design with all life, we advocate greater powers for nonhuman designers. Let us tackle this idea in three parts. We first mention the current efforts to cater for nonhuman lifeforms, which are commendable but insufficient. Next, we provide alternative steps of participation that introduce a journey toward designing with interspecies communities. Finally, we describe a concrete example that follows these steps in practice.

Designing for non-human beings

The interest in green design is growing but most current practices entrust improvements to human experts. Sustainable development, ecosystem services and nature-based solutions are openly human-centric. Bioinspiration, rewilding, and ecological engineering ascribe greater value to self-

organizing capabilities of “natural systems” but still refer to humans for key decisions. Unfortunately, the human track record is poor. Food, pests, parasites, and invasive species exemplify some of the labels that humans use to justify intentional damage. Inadvertent harms of design are even greater. For example, many forms of human construction stifle evolved cultures and behaviours, destroying complex mutualisms. In a reverse move, human suppression of some lifeforms – through poisoning or physical expulsion – results in accelerated emergence of dangerous traits. Resulting wrongs affects all beings, human or nonhuman.

To resist the arrogance and biases of human design, let us acknowledge that nonhuman beings can act as capable participants in the construction of the future. It is not fair to treat them as enemies, resources, or hapless clients.

Steps of participation

To indicate an alternative, we introduce steps of more-than-human participation that rethink Sherry Arnstein’s framework for collaboration within human collectives. Horizontal elements of each step represent relationships within more-than-human communities. The vertical parts are actions that enable greater inclusion. We begin from the top. This end privileges humans by seeing their sentience, cognition and reasoning as unique abilities that entitle

them to sit in unobstructed judgement. From here, the steps descend to the bottom, where consideration is afforded to all beings, without prejudice.

The first step is that of acknowledgement. A common attitude of powerful humans toward weak minorities is that of paternalism. Here, humans decide what is best for trees and birds. A willingness to acknowledge the capabilities of others is a necessary step in more-than human design and can lead to recognition of needs and capabilities. In our work, artificial-intelligence feature recognition exemplifies this step by accounting for habitat properties that humans cannot perceive.

The next riser of empathy leads from recognition to solidarity. Here, humans can foster compassion towards nonhuman lifeforms through appeals to commonalities such as motherhood or sentience. The use of modelling to represent nonhuman subjectivities supports this step in our practice.

Human empathy is important but not sufficient. “Nothing about us without us” is a well-known slogan of many minorities.¹ It emphasizes the need to involve affected stakeholders in all impacting decisions. What is true for ethnicity-based or disability-based marginalization within human communities also applies to more-than-human collectives. We argue that nonhuman agents should be empowered to pursue their own interests in



02

A willingness to acknowledge the capabilities of others is a necessary step in more-than human design and can lead to recognition of needs and capabilities.

design situations, leading from solidarity to autonomy. Here, our example is the ability of digital data to represent individual histories of complex beings such as trees. Resulting information can support ongoing efforts to understand capabilities of plants and defend their rights for movement, communication, and procreation. History demonstrates that political empowerment of minorities is necessary to support the entitlements to safe labour, intellectual property, health, and wellbeing that many nonhuman beings have yet to receive.²

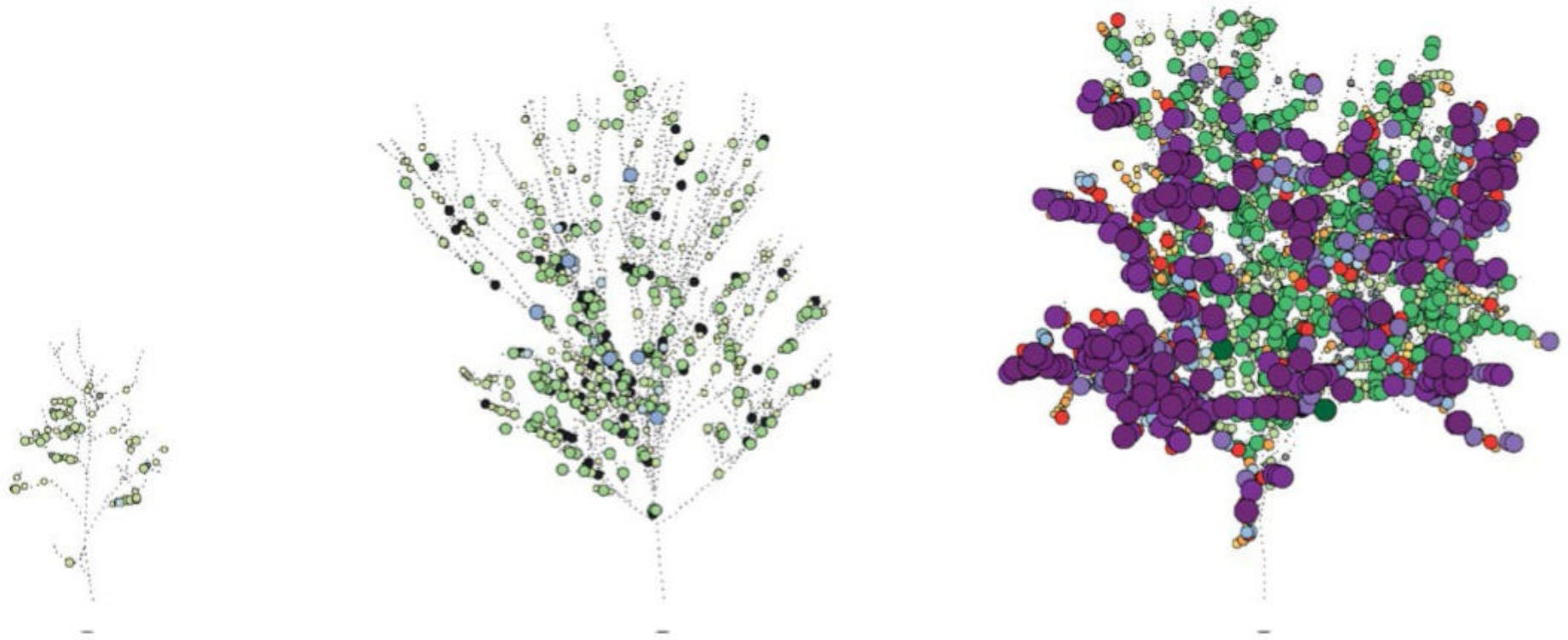
Individual autonomy can imply selfish competition, or “nature red in tooth and claw.”³ This interpretation is contradictory to the current state of knowledge about complex relationships within ecosystems. In response, this step of the stair promotes care as an attitude that can support stakeholder interests in ways that account for the needs and preferences of others, leading from autonomy to conviviality. One example of care in our practice is the

use of dynamic computational models to simulate relationships within more-than-human communities, at landscape scales and for durations that encompass several generations of trees.

Finally, caring relationships within empowered communities are of little consequence unless they can persist. Here, human time scales are clearly insufficient. Impacts on biological and geological systems occur both faster (in microbial evolution) and slower (in forest formation) than humans can experience. Persistence of relationships converts conviviality to commoning—an attitude with inclusive, interspecies, and ecocentric aspirations.⁴ Our work illustrates this step via artificial-intelligence modelling of habitat interaction, as we briefly discuss below.

For birds by trees

Deep Design Lab is an interdisciplinary research and design group that links



many people and organizations. Founded by Stanislav Roudavski, the collective aims to design for and with all life. Its projects investigate interspecies cultures,⁵ replacement homes for arboreal wildlife,⁶ heritage of plants,⁷ examples of living infrastructure,⁸ and artificial intelligence for habitat replication.⁹

Let us describe our project that strives towards the more inclusive steps described above. The project in question emerged when humans sought to “offset” the harm caused by new housing developments by revitalizing a degraded hill. Birds exist on the periphery of this site but struggle because they depend on large trees that are increasingly rare. In recent years, humans have planted many thousands of new seedlings. However, these trees will be too small to provide avian homes before they enter old age, hundreds of years from now. Artificial replacements might help, but what is a good design for an artificial tree? Our approach is to ask birds and trees. Trees design and make the homes that birds select

and use. Birds know what they need and – if so empowered – can guide the design.

Following this logic, we first model the suitability of each branch, as experienced by birds. To do this, we gather high-resolution data about geometries of tree canopies and use machine learning to recognize branches. This operation describes trees with much greater fidelity than that which is attainable via unassisted observations by humans.

We correlate these digital models with field observations. From them, we know that birds prefer to land and perch on dead and exposed branches. Our modelling can quantify spatial distributions of bird preferences, making them useful in design. The proactive part of our workflow uses this information to make innovations flow from trees, through machines, to birds.

Generative design can automatically define a broad variety of patterns. Our numerical

02 — New houses border a degraded hill. Sites such as these can benefit from the installation of artificial trees to supply habitat features that newly planted trees will not be able to provide for hundreds of years. Photo: Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland

03 — Features birds find meaningful include exposed dead branches (highlighted in purple) and lateral branches (highlighted in green). The older tree on the right has many more suitable branches than the younger trees on the left. Image: Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland

Agenda



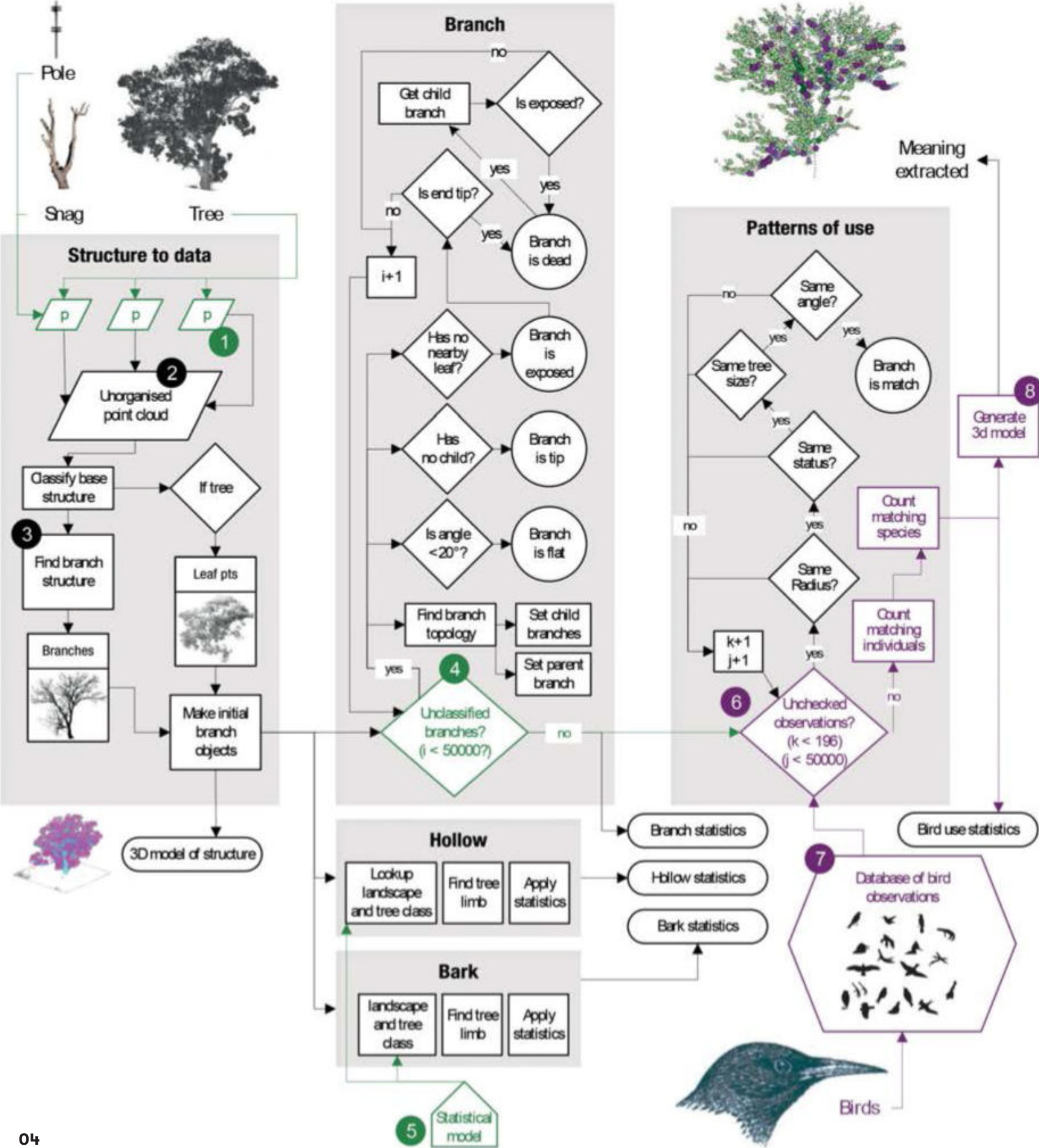
Step 1 (Structure to Data)
Scan structure and convert to organised branch objects.

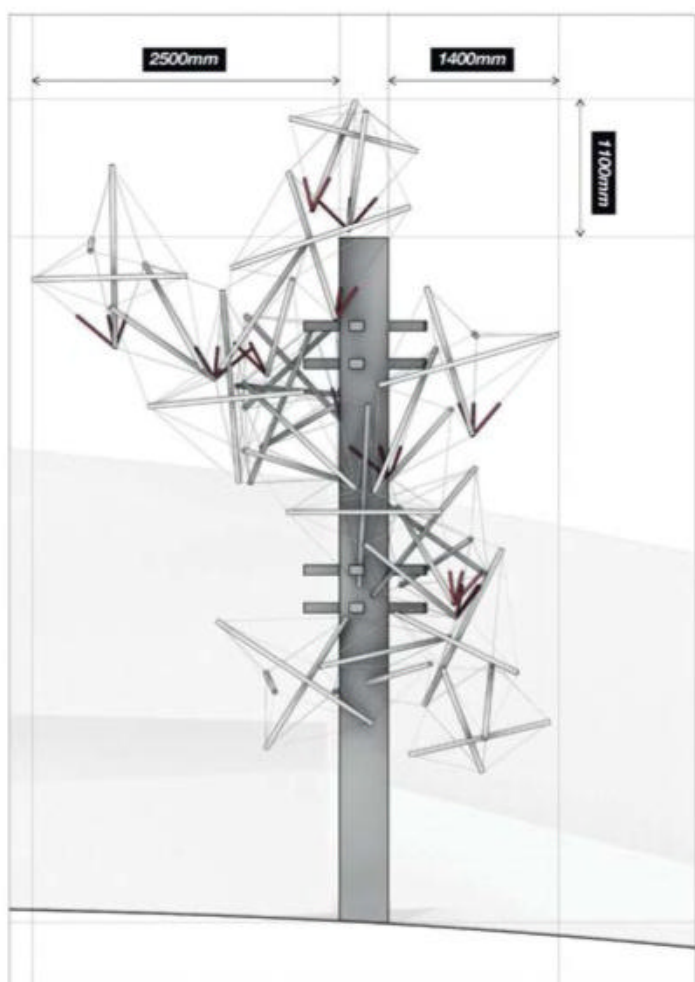


Step 2 (Search Data)
Assign structural properties associated with birds to branch objects.

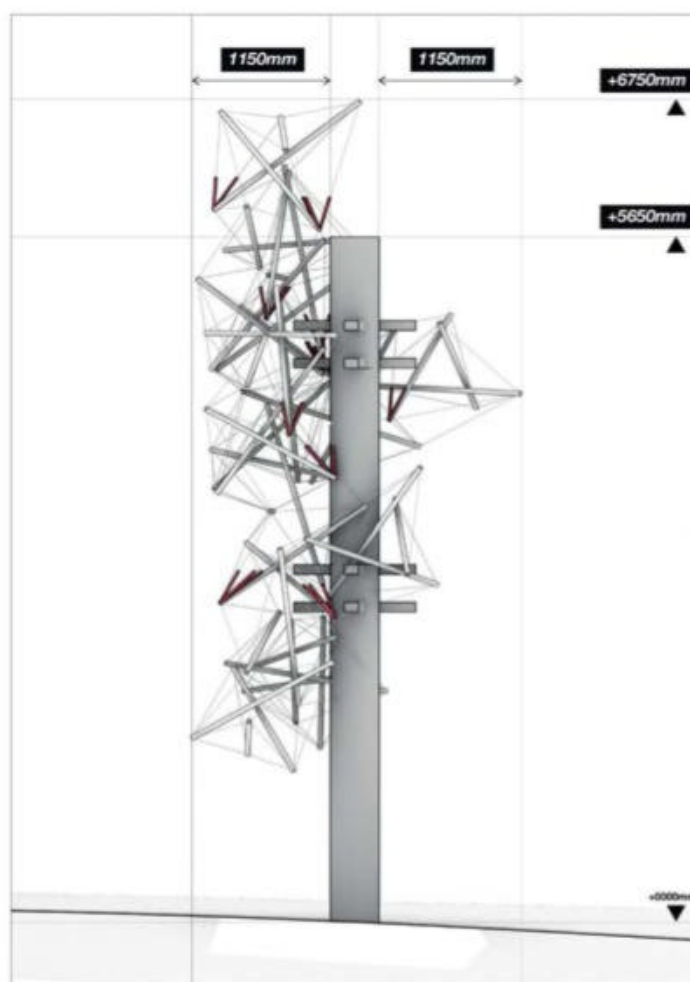


Step 3 (Compare Data)
Estimate patterns of bird use by comparing branch structures to bird behaviour.





05



04 —A diagram depicting the design process. Image: Roudavski and Alexander Holland.

05 —Attaching bird-friendly structures to utility poles is one way to support birds while newly planted trees mature. Image: Stanislav Roudavski and Alexander Holland.

approach helps to select promising designs by comparing them with descriptions of living trees. Resulting structures can be more suitable than those possible through direct modelling by humans.

Such approaches can have wide implications. To illustrate, our modelling demonstrates that an average old tree provides 18 metres of branches that birds find suitable. The loss of such trees can lead to striking regional deficiencies. Today, our test site has no suitable branches. By contrast, the total length of such branches in 1770 was more than 24,000 metres. We estimate that the total length of such branches for the whole of Australia's grassy woodland ecozone is now 11 times smaller (15,033,600 metres) than it was when European colonists first arrived (167,040,000 metres) and disrupted Indigenous management practices.

Just design

To conclude, this article argues for cooperation with nonhuman life and proposes a framing for such cooperation.

Just cooperation within more-than-human worlds is an open and difficult challenge, but our results suggest that humans and nonhumans can design together. Current anthropocentric approaches are often so detrimental that opportunities for improvements – however partial – are within grasp and should not be shunned.¹⁰

1. Versions of this slogan motivated Poland's 1505 laws and the narrative of the American Revolution. For an overview in application to disability, see James I. Charlton, *Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
2. Intersectionality provides a relevant example here, for examples, see Val Plumwood, "Ecosocial Feminism as a General Theory of Oppression," in *Ecology*, ed. Carolyn Merchant, 2nd ed. (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2008); Nekeisha Alayna Alexis, "Beyond Compare: Intersectionality and Interspeciesism for Co-Liberation with Other Animals," in *The Routledge Handbook of Animal Ethics*, ed. Bob Fischer (New York: Routledge, 2020), 502. Proposals for nonhuman labour and property rights offer further context, see Charlotte E. Blattner, Kendra Coulter, and Will Kymlicka, *Animal Labour: A New Frontier of Interspecies Justice?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Karen Bradshaw, "Animal Property Rights," *University of Colorado Law Review* vol. 89, no. 3 (2018): 809–62, <https://doi.org/10/gfsp3n>.
3. This is a Tennyson phrase that was especially popular with nineteenth century naturalists and still has currency due to popular accounts such as that by Richard Dawkins, see Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 2.

4. For the background on the idea of commoning, see David Bollier, *Think Like a Commoner: A Short Introduction to the Life of the Commons* (Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers, 2014).
5. Dan Parker, Kylie Soanes, and Stanislav Roudavski, "Interspecies Cultures and Future Design," *Transpositiones* vol. 1, no. 1 (2022): 183–236, <https://doi.org/10/gpvsfs>.
6. Dan Parker et al., "A Framework for Computer-Aided Design and Manufacturing of Habitat Structures for Cavity-Dependent Animals," *Methods in Ecology and Evolution* vol. 13, no. 4 (2022): 826–41, <https://doi.org/10/gpggfj>.
7. Stanislav Roudavski and Julian Rutten, "Towards More-than-Human Heritage: Arboreal Habitats as a Challenge for Heritage Preservation," *Built Heritage* vol. 4, no. 4 (2020): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10/ggpv66>.
8. Bonnie J. Gordon and Stanislav Roudavski, "More-than-Human Infrastructure for Just Resilience: Learning from, Working with, and Designing for Bald Cypress Trees (*Taxodium distichum*) in the Mississippi River Delta," *Global Environment* vol. 14, no. 3 (2021): 442–74, <https://doi.org/10/gmxbh2>.
9. Gabriele Mirra et al., "An Artificial Intelligence Agent That Synthesises Visual Abstractions of Natural Forms to Support the Design of Human-Made Habitat Structures," *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* vol. 10, no. 17 March (2022): 806453, <https://doi.org/10/gpp6mb>.
10. The work in this article is an outcome of a collective effort and we thank contributions of all members of Deep Design Lab.



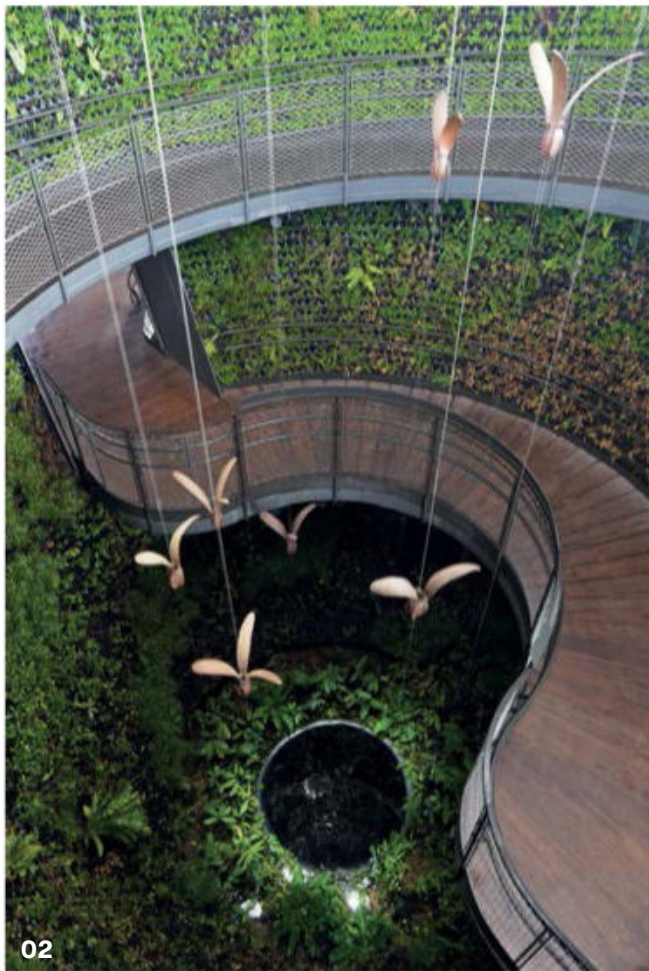


Rewilding in a post-humanist world: Salad Dressing

The work of the Singapore-based landscape architecture practice envisions a future world in which humans, nature and machines co-exist and co-evolve.

—
Text Jillian Walliss

Agenda



01 — The Orchid Room from the Singapore Pavilion features four terrariums filled with native orchid species and a backdrop of ornamental orchids. Photo: Quentin Sim

02 — Models of dipterocarp seed spin down through the Rain Forest Cone. Photo: Singapore Pavilion, Expo 2020, Dubai

03 — COVID-19 disruptions provided the opportunity to introduce technology into the exhibitions. Photo: Salad Dressing

04 — The entrance to the Singapore Pavilion. Photo: Singapore Pavilion, Expo 2020, Dubai



In early August 2022, Huai-yan Chang and Yu Han Goh from Singapore-based landscape practice Salad Dressing were guests of the Melbourne School of Design. Chang founded the practice in 2002, when he was just 23. Since then, it has grown to around 25 people, with director of design, Goh, joining in 2010. Chang and his colleagues have shaped a unique design studio that merges philosophical explorations of time, meaning and the natural world with the business demands of a contemporary landscape practice.

I had a chance to get Chang and Goh’s views on authorship and collaboration in between events on their busy Melbourne schedule. Salad Dressing has certainly had its work copied, but the highly exploratory nature of the practice makes it difficult to simply “take” its concepts. As an evolving practice driven by a mix of philosophy, ecology, plants, design, technology and popular culture, its knowledge is not contained within a single idea. Collaboration is part of the studio ethos, whether it’s working with architects such as WOHA, or sharing its concept of “rewilding,” which conceives of a world equally shared between humans, plants and animals.

Collaboration begins with a strong project direction

Salad Dressing has extensively collaborated with WOHA, most recently on the award-winning Singapore Pavilion for Dubai Expo 2020. Titled *Nature. Nurture. Future.*, the pavilion references a culture of bioclimatic design based on Singapore’s long experience of integrating nature into the design and function of artificial structures.

The studio was involved early in the design process, once WOHA had established the general design idea of three cones, or “coffee cups,” surrounded by a park landscape. According to Chang, WOHA’s clear design direction makes them excellent collaborators. When a question or challenge arises, WOHA asks for the Salad Dressing team’s opinions, encouraging different solutions to emerge. Goh comments that “we can tell them about our feelings on the space and architecture.” She continues, “Other architects may say they want landscape input earlier, but often they don’t really know what this means.” For Salad Dressing, good collaboration is where architecture and landscape merge, but this requires the



Agenda

07 — Working across natural and digital ecosystems, a robot collects data from the vertical topography of the vegetated cones. Photo: Singapore Pavilion, Expo 2020, Dubai









05 — The hotel facade features ficus trees (a keystone species) and climbers that connect the ground to the sky. Photo: Salad Dressing

06 — A series of distinctive monsoonal microclimates are designed along the length of the hotel. Photo: Salad Dressing

decentralizing of the power of architecture – which rarely happens. Instead, architects often place their ideas around their design, rather than developing more complex relationships.

The pavilion’s three cone-shaped steel structures, designed in configurations of a funnel, a vase and a dissected form, were conceived to house exhibitions. National pavilions require engagement with a range of government agencies, who have traditionally viewed them as trade shows. Originally, these exhibitions were outside the designer’s scope of works, but WOHA and Salad Dressing curated their content.

The rainforest cone presents the rich, biodiverse natural heritage of Singapore, depicted through a forest of native species thriving at a precise temperature, humidity and irrigation level. Models of dipterocarp seeds spin down through a texture of deep mist and rainbow onto a forest floor. The potential co-evolution of nature, humans and technology is the focus of the flower cone. Four lit terrariums filled with native orchid species are suspended in the darkness, dramatically contrasting against

a backdrop of methodically selected, preened orchids.

COVID-19 disruptions added an extra year to the design process, which allowed for the introduction of a technological layer. For instance, the orchid room concept was expanded through the consideration of how technology could help in conservation. A robot was introduced to climb around the vertical topography; the data it collects is used to learn about the nurturing of plants. Viewed as a plant “ambassador,” the robot conveys emotion and plant knowledge to visitors. For example, the robot detects plant health and shows happiness if the plant is flowering and sadness if the plant is struggling. Robots, games and digital artwork were added to connect the natural world and the digital ecosystem, and to suggest that the health of our planet is a factor of individual action and collective effort. Combined, the pavilion design, technology, ecology, art and play reflect a future in which machine, human and nature enable each other, co-existing and co-evolving. Aligned with Salad Dressing’s concept of “rewilding,” this idea of co-existence has inspired many of the studio’s projects, including a hotel in Borneo.

Designing for 33/33/33/1

Salad Dressing explores the potential of a post-humanist future in which hierarchical biases are dissolved and the world is co-created by – and shared between – humans, animals and plants. The studio describes this relationship through the ratio 33/33/33/1, with 33 percent for other living beings, 33 for digital beings, 33 for human beings, and the other 1 percent for the abstract – the ecological imminent and the untamed imagination. The team’s design for a hotel at Alila Dalit Bay in Borneo offers a compelling example of how these ideas can drive a commercial project.

Facing the sea, and with a mountain backdrop, the 230-metre-long hotel creates a series of distinctive microclimates within a monsoonal climate. Connectivity drives everything in the design. The facade is blanketed with green, with droppers and climbers connecting the ground to the sky. Ficus trees (a keystone species) burst from the facade and send down aerial roots. Birds and terrestrial animals such as palm civets come to enjoy the fruit and exchange nutrients and microorganisms.

After rain, residual water from the building is directed through the topography in a series

of ponds and phytoremediation plants that connect into the flood plain. The water is cleansed of silt and nutrients before it reaches the sea. An eco-playground is planted with a variety of fruit trees to share with animals and features a house for the bats, who are important pollinators in the surrounding mangrove forest. An animal-friendly lighting concept protects these nocturnal friends.

And then there is the hotel’s cultural connection, shaped by a design philosophy of immateriality. Sun paths were calculated to frame the sunset in a series of pavilions on special days such as Earth Day, Labour Day, Mangrove Day, Children’s Day, Christmas Day and St Valentine’s Day, along with the client’s birthday.

If you want to learn more about the “rewilding” design practice of Salad Dressing, head to their Facebook or Instagram – but not their website, which, in their own words, is basic. Chang views the web site as offering “business legitimacy” rather than a record of their design work. Facebook is where the studio posts most of their design work, accompanied by some descriptive text (along with image posts on Instagram). Facebook, on the other hand, is all about connections, which perfectly aligns with their practice philosophy.

08 — Residual water from the building moves through the topography into ponds filled with phytoremediation plants. Photo: Salad Dressing





MOS®
www.mosurban.com

TOP REASONS

for Landscape architects and Urban designers to Choose Nexsys as your preferred IT & Design Technology Partner.

01

Fit for Purpose Design Technology – Autodesk Revit® and Arch-Intelligences Environment for Revit® is the perfect mix of industry standard and Landscape specific design technology.

02

Australian based Planting content – We are continually updating our local planting library for Revit®.

03

BIM ready expertise – We have over decades of experience in BIM projects and assist clients with collaboration and coordination processes.



”

Nexsys offers its support services to all our Urbis offices nationally, allowing Urbis to lead the way when it comes to BIM for Landscape Architecture. Nexsys helps our design team make critical decisions relating to Hardware and Software solutions for Landscape Architecture

Design... -- Sherman Powell, Urbis Groups BIM and CAD manager.

”

04

Fit for Purpose Hardware – Our equipment is configured specifically for the industry and includes the software image pre-loaded. We purchase legacy hardware and sustainably repurpose.

05

Finance for Hardware and Software – We can offer 3YR Fair Market Value Lease @ 0% Interest when bundling hardware & software. (Terms and Conditions apply)

06

Sustainable initiatives - Our purpose is to create shared value by solving problems that matter to a complex, urbanising and resource-scarce world and to limit Nexsys and our clients carbon footprint.



Images are supplied courtesy of Urbis P/L

For more information on Autodesk Revit® and Arch-Intelligences Environment for Revit go to www.nexsysit.com.au or call 1300 733 010

Co-authoring

The contemporary project is rarely achieved by a single designer. Input from multiple disciplines, along with the creative potentials presented by design media, contribute to design being understood as a co-authored practice.



www.saistone.com.au
1300 855 851

SAI STONE Street Series

*Customised Stone Bollards,
Planters plus more*

Base Material: Sesame White Granite
Statue Material: Ash Grey Granite
Project: West Side Place, Melbourne
Finish: Sawn



Co-authoring in the digital age

Digital technologies are challenging traditional notions of the designer as author, as data is shared and design outcomes are produced in new and evolving ways.

—
Text Heike Rahmann and Daniel Ichallalene

Agenda

Digital technologies and media influence almost every moment of our daily lives. Together with increasingly agile management systems, technological advancements – including computers, the internet, algorithms, artificial intelligence and the cloud – have reinvented nearly every business.¹ Practising landscape architecture in this environment raises two questions regarding authorship: first, how data, information and designs are shared; and second, how ideas and outcomes are produced.

Open-source resources offer unprecedented access to collaborative communities in which to exchange ideas. In 2015, Italian architect Carlo Ratti and designer Matthew Claudel from MIT’s Senseable City Lab expanded the notion of collaborative community in their manifesto *Open Source Architecture*, exploring how the public can be involved in the creation of architecture.² The authors envision an alternative future for the profession, arguing for a paradigm shift from sole authorship to a more collaborative model of architectural production. In other words, authorship in digital design culture is radically changing practice.

Discussions about authorship in the digital age emerged with Web 2.0. Led by historians Mario Carpo and Antoine Picon, discussions in architecture followed. While the landscape profession is slowly starting to engage with digital design practice, discourse about authorship in this environment has not yet surfaced. So, what concerns are relevant to

the profession? Design is a reciprocal process between designers and their media, tools and people, and these three elements provide a framework for rethinking authorship in digital landscape practice.

First, the profession engages with building information modelling (BIM), which is widely understood as a collaborative environment for more efficient documentation, construction and procurement workflows. While facilitating collaboration, the authorship discussion in BIM is also fundamentally about power and control because the model dissolves professional boundaries and traditional artisan-centred definitions of design.

Second, computers have fundamentally shifted practice, allowing co-authorship with design media through digital fabrication and prototyping. Closely related to the hand-tool relationship in traditional crafting, digital fabrication explores and tests material behaviour and performance (its effects and affects).

Third, scripting and simulation differ from traditional tools and media because a range of people are involved in developing software packages and plug-ins, creating complex nested authorships.³ Further, parametric design involves iterative processes between analysis and formation. This approach means the relationship between input and output is not entirely controlled or predictable, giving agency to computers as co-authors. Used in conjunction with

imagination, simulations contribute to the generation of designs responsive to the effects of dynamic systems.

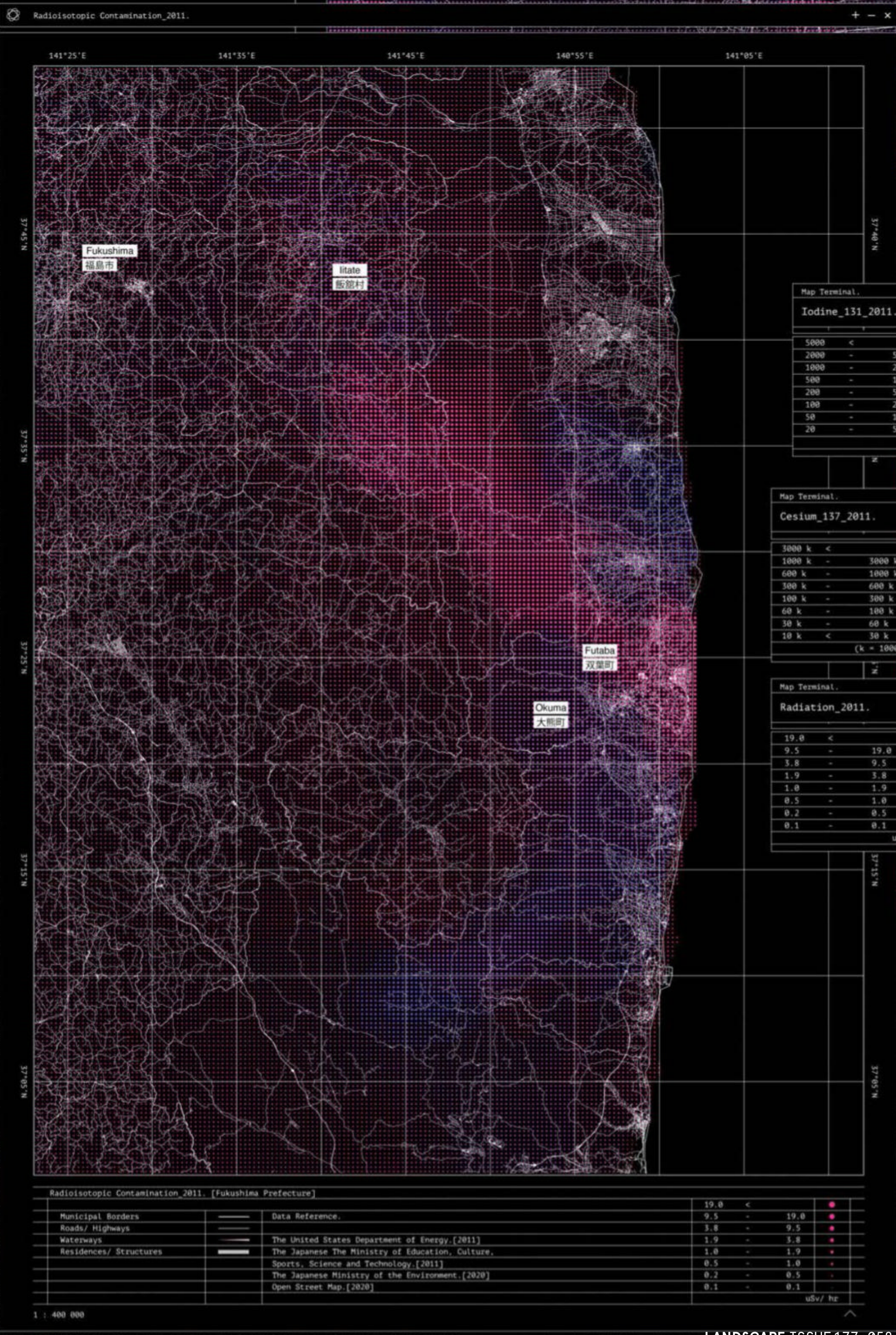
The following example illustrates an approach to computational co-authorship necessitated by site constraints and strategic frameworks. “Potentials of the post nuclear: The strategic recalibration of remediative efforts in Fukushima,” by one of the authors of this article (Daniel Ichallalene) is a speculative research project. It seeks to capitalize on the existing remediative efforts demonstrated in Fukushima, Japan to minimize the cumulative environmental impacts of the 2011 nuclear accident while reconciling the site’s ecological and perceptual legacies within the lineage of nuclear energy.

The restricted quality of the site and concern for intangibles such as radioisotopic contamination require remote analysis and three-dimensional proxies, necessitating a computational design process. Simultaneously, these computational workflows enable engagement with that which can neither be accessed nor perceived, a context that built environment industries are encountering with greater frequency.

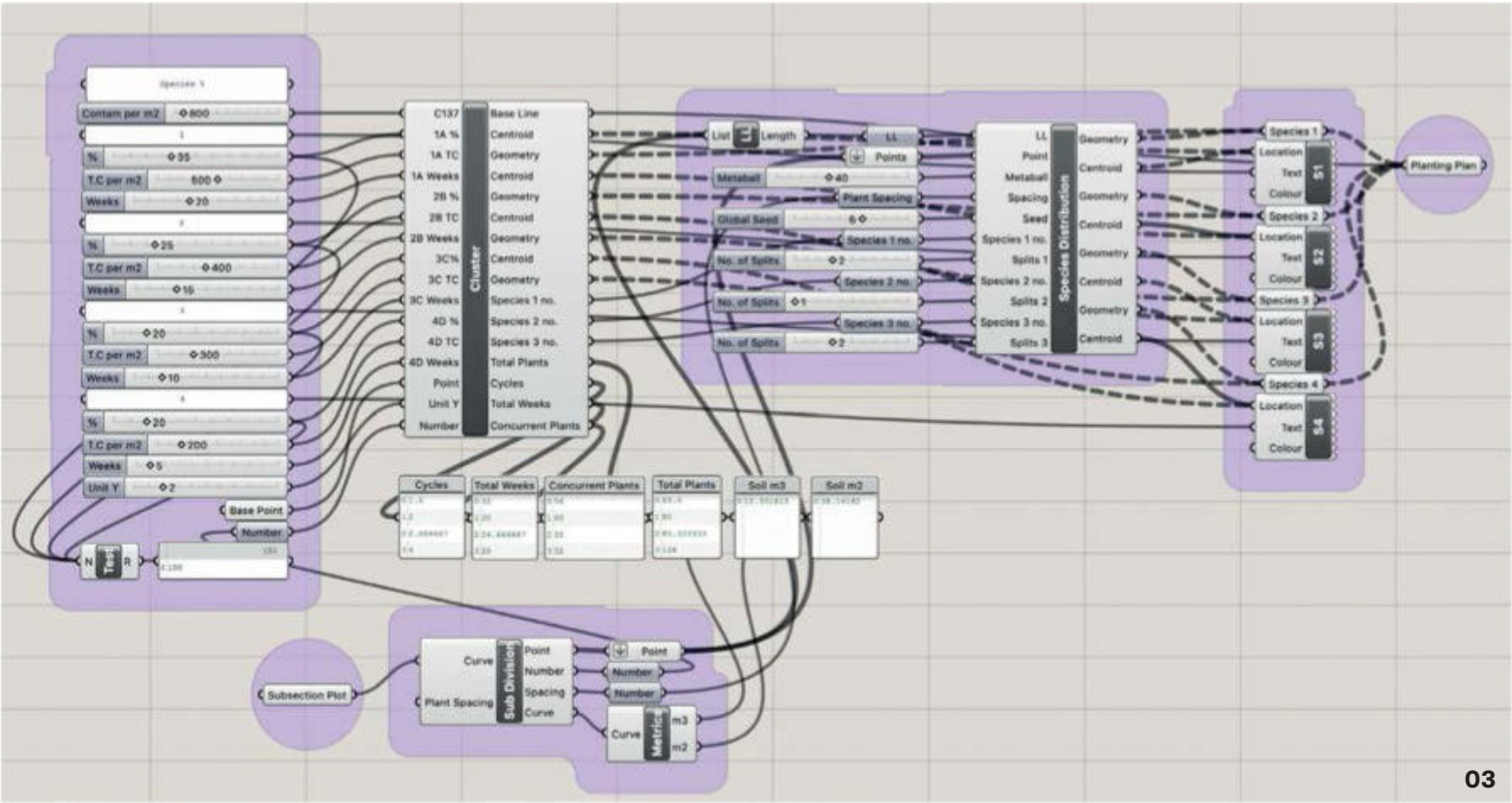
The project utilizes a range of open-source databases, including the remote sensing of radioisotopic contaminants and ambient radiation conducted by the United States Department of Defense and Japan’s Ministry of the Environment. Cadastral geometries are sourced from Open Street Map, as

01 — Remediative planting from “Potentials of the post nuclear,” Daniel Ichallalene’s 2021 masters thesis project. Image: Daniel Ichallalene.

02 — Interpolated mappings of radioisotopic contamination in Fukushima, Japan created using open-source data, including data on contaminants and radiation obtained by the US Department of Defense and Japan’s Ministry of the Environment through the use of remote sensing technology. Image: Daniel Ichallalene.



Agenda



03 — A phasing script that automates the staging and distribution of remediative planting in response to terrain and ambient radiation levels. Image: Daniel Ichallalene.

are geo-data from Google Earth Engine. Through scripting, these readings are spatialized, extrapolated and correlated to ascertain current site conditions and evaluate the long-term efficacy of existing remediative procedures.

This dense layering of spatialized data enabled a strategy of targeted interventions to be formulated, deployed and tested across an accurate site model. Terraces on opportune segments of redundant land were automated in response to gradient, aspect and curvature. These subdivisions were then operationally phased to balance remediative output rates with ambient radiation levels and their impact on the site’s potential for visitation – a strategy that results in the automation of both form and function.

Tactically, this project structure sets up the site proxy to function as a sort of digital sandbox, incurring the capacity to maintain multiple potentialities for design outcomes. Without computation, this level of precision, rigour and scale would be untenable. While retaining control of the design, this process acknowledges the computer as co-author.

As architectural design encounters an expanding spectrum of spatiotemporal scales, a threshold of effective manual input emerges, a point of diminishing returns after

which analogue formal design elements are no longer effective. Instead, design is perhaps better deployed at scale as sets of predefined relationships, capable of both incremental adjustment and holistic iteration. In this paradigm, design is a sequence of logic that determines an outcome.

A digital design practice presents new design logic, reflective of a different relationship between designers, information and processes. Digital techniques continue to radically alter design and construction workflows, most notably through extended collaboration in the BIM environment and development of open-source software.

New interrelation between designers, media and tools through parametric design and scripting establish further points of distinction in the landscape approach, in which designers cannot fully control or influence forms, systems or phenomena. Instead, designers must intervene in systems that have their own agency and characteristics, requiring different types of design strategies and tactics. This provides exciting opportunities for iterative and collaborative design processes in creative practice.

Simultaneously, the digital questions the definition of authorship. In a digital

environment, traditional notions of the designer as author controlling the relationship between input and output are challenged. Instead, the digital contains multiplying, integrated authorships. Discussions in architecture have already started to reflect on this challenge, arguing that authorship in the digital age becomes less professionally sustainable and calling for a reframing of authorship through the legal lenses of ownership, intellectual property and copyright.⁴

Authorship issues might not appear urgent in landscape architecture, as the profession has been comparatively slow to adopt advanced digital practices. Similarly, the discipline does not conceive of authorship in the same way as “ego-fuelled” architecture. But as the digital age continues to reinvent practice, we must at least understand its possibilities and challenges.

1. Steve Denning, “How the digital age is reinventing (almost) everything,” *Forbes*, 5 September 2021, forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2021/09/05/how-the-digital-age-is-reinventing-almost-everything/?sh=68b87098e7f3 (accessed 2 December 2022).
2. Carlo Ratti and Matthew Claudel, *Open Source Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2015).
3. Princeton School of Architecture, “Antoine Picon: The ownership revolution. Digital culture and the transformation of architectural practice and ideals,” 2015, vimeo.com/189623723 (accessed 5 August 2022).
4. Princeton School of Architecture, “Antoine Picon,” 2015.

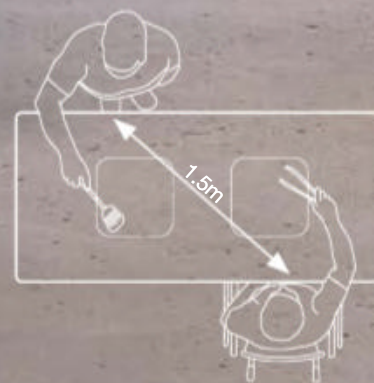
CHRISTIE

Barbecues for everyone



The Christie ICON barbecue cabinet provides universal access while retaining an uncompromising focus on safety, durability, and ease of maintenance.

Its sleek, low-profile benchtop maximises the usable bench space and offers generous individual food preparation area.



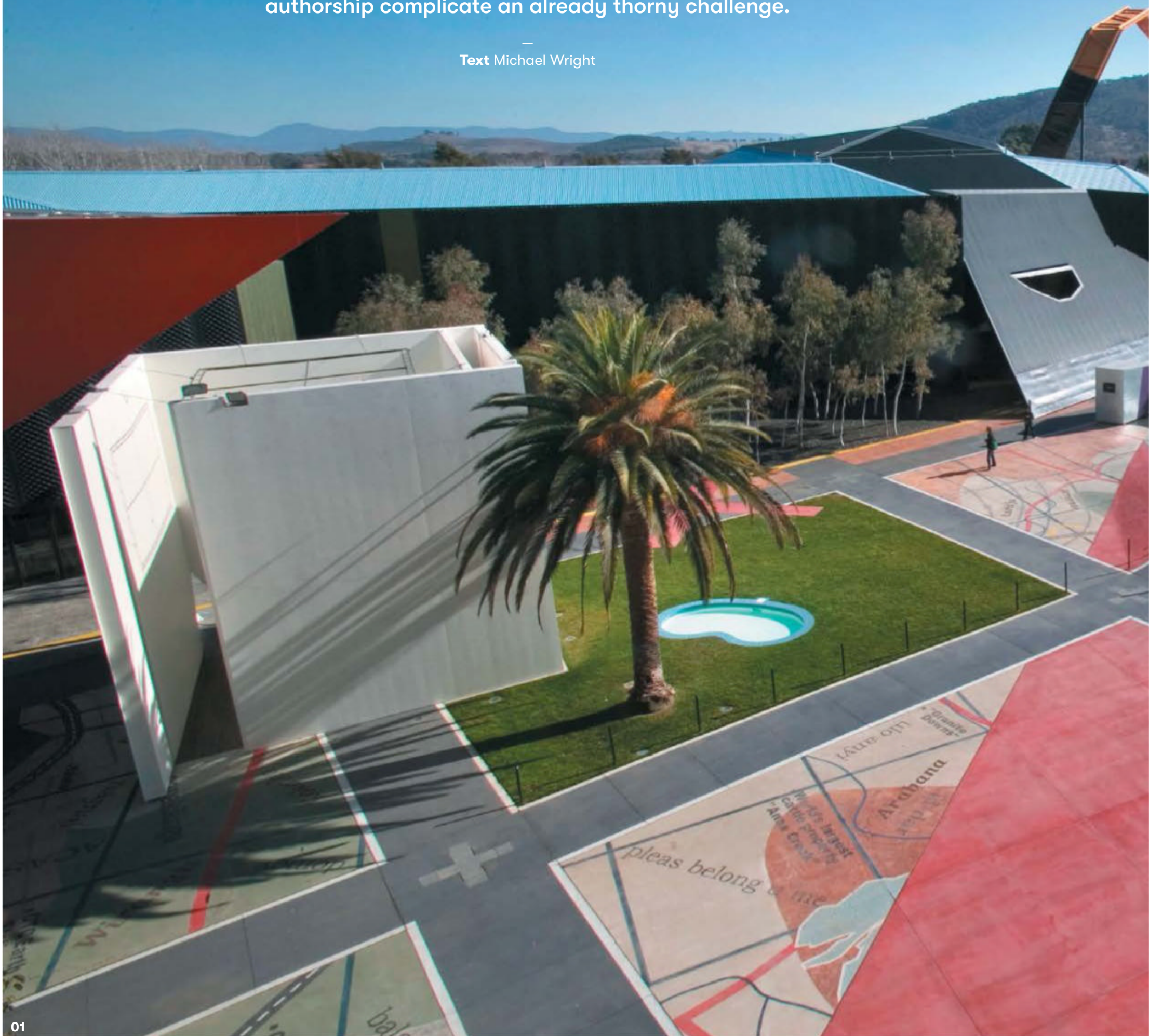
Design without compromise

dachristie.com

Who has a right in the copy?

Discerning which rights and protections a work might receive under copyright law can be a difficult process. For landscape architects, however, unique barriers to moral authorship complicate an already thorny challenge.

Text Michael Wright





Agenda

In April 1917, Marcel Duchamp exhibited the canonical sculpture *Fountain* at the Grand Central Palace in New York. Duchamp signed the work “R. Mutt”: a satirical emblem borrowed from “Mott Works,” a manufacturer of sanitary ware. The “artistic work” was a urinal, laid on its side and presented on a pedestal in the gallery. In one simple operation, Duchamp disrupted conventional art practice and the role of the artist, perhaps forever. Conceptual art was born, and ideas about “authorship” have never been the same.

Authorship in landscape architecture is bound by more conventional norms, deriving primarily from international law: the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886).¹ Australia’s *Copyright Act 1968*² (last amended July 2022) gives force to the Convention within the Commonwealth and embodies the long history of copyright law in Australia.³ This lineage can be traced

back to the Statute of Anne of 1710,⁴ an Act of the British Parliament that was designed to protect authors from the losses caused by the copying of their books. This was the moment when a property right was first established in a copy, and it arose as the printing press began to extend the reach of information to a needy public.

This right, or privilege,⁵ is a commercial right, and it was designed, in part, to encourage authors and institutions to publish, to make accessible the knowledge of the world. This public benefit in copyright laws is arguably what makes palatable the “individual monopoly” of these privileges. The Berne Convention also confers rights upon authors, and this is the origin of moral rights in our Copyright Act. Introduced into Australian law in 2000, the legislation was soon tested by landscape architects. The right of an author to be attributed and the protections that moral rights might grant us were widely publicized when, in 2003,

Richard Weller of landscape architecture firm Room 4.1.3 embarked upon a public campaign to assert these rights.⁶ The Garden of Australian Dreams at the National Museum of Australia had just been opened and was under threat from the review committee of the Howard government.

The committee wanted substantial change. Weller responded with threats of legal action, citing moral rights. It is fortunate that this landmark work was not butchered. Legal action did not proceed and the matter was not heard in a court. There have been no cases heard in Australia about moral rights in landscape architecture, and it is not at all clear that the laws in moral rights apply to any of our built works. This is because authors may only claim moral rights for works in which copyright subsists. The Copyright Act certainly applies to a landscape architect’s sketches, drawings,⁷ writings and documentation, over which employers or design practices hold

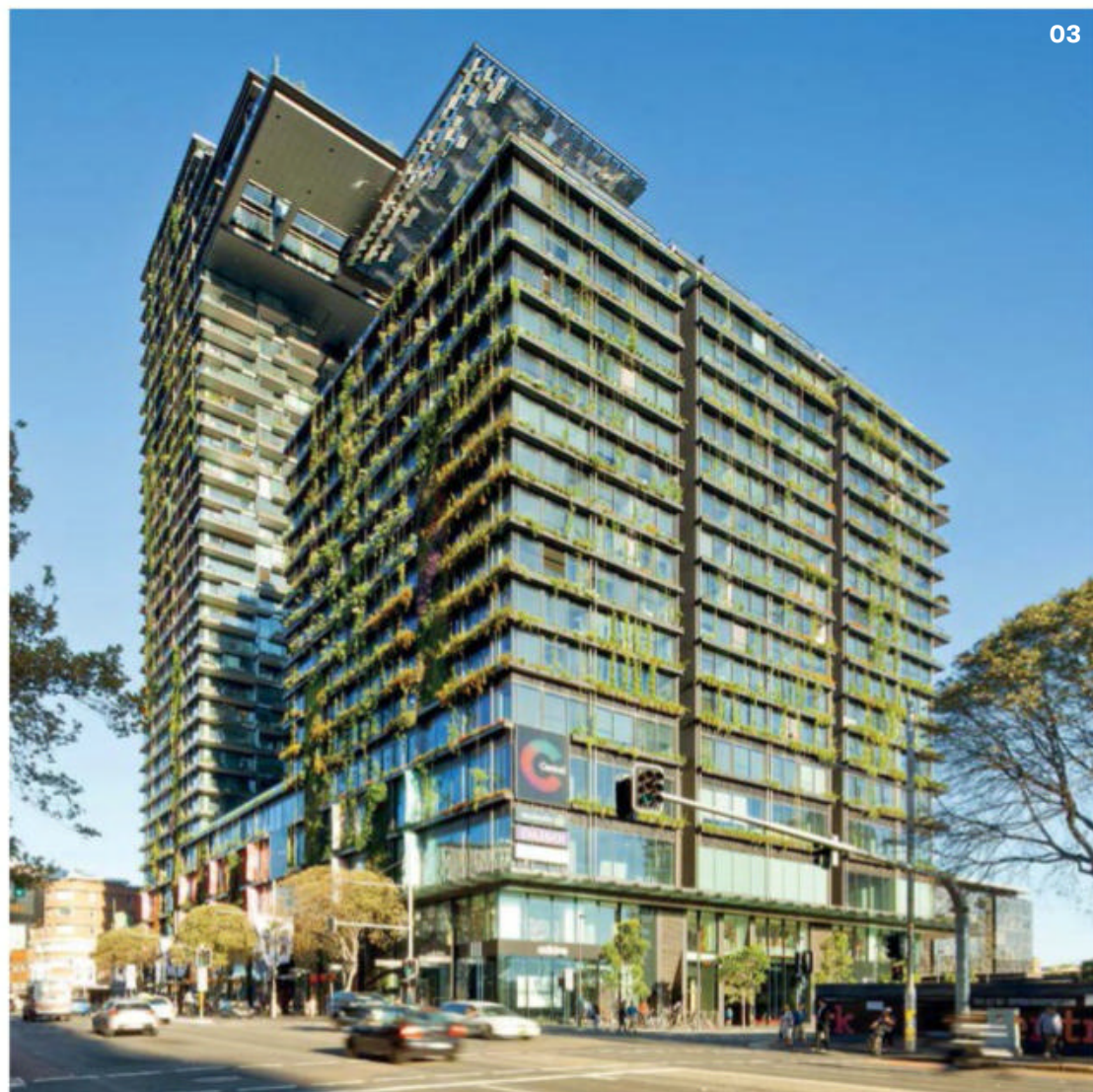
01 — Non-living components of the Garden of Australian Dreams, such as sculpture, are more likely to receive protection under copyright than living items (for instance, plants). Photo: courtesy NMA.

02 — Marcel Duchamp’s *Fountain* (1917) provoked debate that catalyzed new ways of thinking about – and legislating – intellectual property and authorship. Photo: PA Images/Alamy stock photo.

03 — The planted facades of One Central Park in Sydney illustrate the complex challenges landscape architects face when asserting authorship and establishing copyright in their projects. Photo: Simon Wood.



Authors may only claim moral rights for works in which copyright subsists . . . In this definition lies a conundrum for landscape because the built work must be either fixed in “material form” or “solidified.”



03

copyright. Any person who contributed to any of these outputs may claim authorship, and this is a right that cannot be assigned or traded away; it stays with us for life, and 70 years after that.

The Copyright Act extends to buildings; parts of and attachments to buildings;⁸ and a few related named categories – like works of architecture, painting and sculpture.⁹ These seem to echo the interests and understanding of British Law Lords. Landscape architects are not mentioned, but our plans and drawings are captured alongside similar artistic works. In this definition lies a conundrum for landscape because the built work must be either fixed in “material form” or “solidified.” If it can’t be so fixed, copyright cannot subsist.¹⁰

One might imagine that the Garden of Australian Dreams would qualify; it has components of sculpture, painting and building that might meet the criteria for fixation in material form. The garden contains few living plants and is more land art than landscape in the traditional sense. It is certainly solid, sharing the fixedness of

a sculpture (like Duchamp’s *Fountain*). The campaign to claim moral rights may have helped defend it, even if the new laws were not tested.

By contrast, *Wildflower Works*, a large-scale planted land art piece in the United States by artist Chapman Kelley, was destroyed against Kelley’s wishes. Kelley claimed moral rights,¹¹ but copyright could not be found in the work.¹² While this is US law, such an approach could certainly be persuasive here. The judge said, “A garden is planted and cultivated, not authored” and “owes most of its form and appearance to natural forces.” As to fixation, he said that a garden is “alive and inherently changeable” and “not stable or permanent enough to be called ‘fixed.’”¹³

Somewhere along the intellectual spectrum of landscape conceived as inherently changeable and the “frozen” land art of the Garden of Australian Dreams would be found most works in landscape architecture. Within this spectrum, some works might be regarded as fixed in material form, but most would not.

This is important when the time comes to credit a project, which is – for copyright holders and authors – a vexing issue at the best of times. It is even more important when it is necessary to protect the work or enforce a right. Often, it is unclear who designed what in published projects, especially when landscape is an integral part of a building. One Central Park in Sydney, for instance, has many designers and has been published in many places, but it takes considerable effort to understand that landscape architects Aspect-Oculus designed and documented most of the planted facades. One might be forgiven for thinking that they were designed by the architects, or indeed by other landscape practitioners.

Beautiful as they are, it is troublesome to find that these superb creations of landscape architecture would almost certainly not count as artistic works because they do not meet the standard for fixation in material form under the Copyright Act.¹⁴ In consequence, those that worked on them would have no moral right to be identified as authors under Australian law – and the protections available in such circumstances

Agenda

04 — Aspect-Oculus designed the green facades at One Central Park. Works in living media continue to receive fewer protections under copyright law. Photo: Michael Wright.



do not extend to landscape architects. Moral rights do not, in these works, exist.

There are other legal protections available, however, and these are found in the settled laws of misrepresentation,¹⁵ misleading or deceptive conduct¹⁶ and “passing off.”¹⁷ Irrespective of any copyright, it is unlawful to create even an impression that the work of another is one’s own, or to allow such an impression to continue. This is the case even if no damage is caused. In Australian design culture, misrepresentation of this kind occurs frequently. It is found often in awards programs, occasionally in magazines and everywhere online. Sometimes, it is accidental.

Like all design disciplines, our trade exists in the sale of ideas brought into material form. We rely on the recognition of our work and the ability to protect it to gain competitive advantage. Having work taken away and displayed as someone else’s can be gut-wrenching, as one watches the accolades fall falsely on those whose only claim might be “principal consultant.” When your work is the emblem of the project, or its most

beautiful component, or the reason the project was approved at all, the irony can be complete.

The irony extends further, because the realm that makes us different from other designers has, oddly, become our weakness. The laws in copyright reveal that landscapes that are predominantly composed of plants have the fewest protections. At a time when the inventiveness of projects like One Central Park is so sorely needed, the rewards and privileges of copyright seem even more distant. For now, we can rely only on commercial law¹⁸ and argue at every turn for fair representation that does not mislead.¹⁹

1. Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886; as amended 28 September 1979), wipolex.wipo.int/en/treaties/textdetails/12214.
2. *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth).
3. For an excellent new book on the subject, see David Brennan, *Copyright Law* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2021).
4. *An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of such Copies, during the Times therein mentioned* 1710, 8 Anne, c 19, s 1 (Statute of Anne).
5. As discussed by Ronan Deazley in *Rethinking Copyright: History, Theory, Language* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2006), 135.

6. See Matthew Rimmer, “The Garden of Australian Dreams: The Moral Rights of Landscape Architects,” in Fiona MacMillan, Kathy Bowrey (eds), *New Directions in Copyright Law*, vol. 3 (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2006), 134–170.
7. Copyright Act s 10, definitions: “artistic work.”
8. Copyright Act s 32(3)(b).
9. Paintings, sculptures, drawings, engravings, photographs, buildings or models of buildings, works of artistic craftsmanship; see also Copyright Act s 31(1)(b).
10. Copyright Act s10, definitions: “material form.” For discussion of impermanence, see *Komesaroff v Mickle*.
11. The US Federal equivalent: *Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990* (VARA), 17 USC s 106A.
12. *Chapman Kelley v. Chicago Park District*, Nos 08-3701 and 08-3712 (7th Cir. 15 February 2011).
13. As discussed in Jani McCutcheon, “Natural Causes: When Author Meets Nature in Copyright Law and Art. Some Observations Inspired by *Kelley v. Chicago Park District*,” *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, vol. 86, no. 2, 2018, 707.
14. Copyright Act s 194 (1)(a).
15. *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) s 29: Misrepresentation.
16. Competition and Consumer Act, s 18: Misleading and deceptive conduct.
17. The “civil wrong” equivalent of misrepresentation, requiring actual harm to be shown.
18. Competition and Consumer Act, s 18: Misleading and deceptive conduct.
19. Thanks are due to David Brennan, Visiting Fellow at the UTS Law Faculty, for suggesting lines of enquiry that informed the final version of this article. Melbourne intellectual property lawyer Sharon Givoni also assisted with review and comment on key legal concepts.

THE PINNACLE OF RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

**HOUSES
AWARDS**

2023 ENTRIES OPEN

Enter the Garden or
Landscape category

housesawards.com.au

PARTNERS



artedomus



BRICKWORKS



SUSSEX

TAUBMANS

Latitude

PRESENTER

HOUSES

ORGANIZER





What is authorship?

Perspectives from a practicing landscape architect

Does authorship matter in a post-truth public realm, when unauthorized digital copies of built projects can be purchased on the international market? Kirsten Bauer teases out the contradictions of “authorship” and calls for generosity in recognizing co-authors.

Text Kirsten Bauer

01 A formative project for Aspect Studios back in the early 2000s, Canberra's National Emergency Services Memorial has since been added to by different designers. Photo: Ben Wrigley

It's easy to get angry. In the aftermath of a project, the clients, media, public and our collaborators can be guilty of failing to recognize the contribution – the authorship – of the landscape architect. For myself, as a practitioner and director of Aspect Studios, to be an author of a project means the practice and I have participated significantly in the design and delivery of that project. Usually, the position is one of co-authorship. True single authorship, by a person or entity, is rare.

On the one hand, I believe we should live in a generous world where recognition of authorship is neither needed nor sought. We, as designers, are active participants in a complex, overdetermined, post-truth public realm, always working with others as co-authors. Our projects change over time, not just because of their nature (for instance, the plants in them grow, the materials in them weather) but because we've made them public, handing custodianship of them over to individuals, organizations and councils to continue the process of authoring. If you work in the public realm you have to be prepared to let go of your creations.

On the other hand, I also believe that authorship relates to professional respect and the recognition of the blood, sweat and tears, and the knowledge, talent and ideas of individual designers and design practices. And that is where things can get ugly: when the respect and recognition that is due is directed (either unthinkingly or deliberately) towards certain contributors to the project, while others remain unacknowledged.

(Lack of) acknowledgement

The most common form of authorship gripe: your collaborator, most often the lead firm, promotes the project, but does not even mention your practice. Once a common occurrence, the situation is slowly improving, yet it continues to remain a constant friction between the professions, irrespective of who the lead consultant of the project is. Design practices' websites tend to be the worst in this respect, with omission of other practices' contributions to featured projects justified by the claim that "our practice's website is about us."

Non-lead authors are rarely mentioned in media releases. Here, the client is often the guilty party, honouring (usually) the architect. This culturally entrenched behaviour is tied to the idea of singular authorship, often associated with the notion of a genius who has offered god-like guidance over the project. But this doesn't need to be the case. Aspect Studios has had a very positive experience of co-authorship in relation to the design of Yagan Square. From the outset of that project, it was agreed that Lyons Architecture, Iredale Pedersen Hook and Aspect Studios would always be named as co-collaborators. Lyons has championed this position emphatically.

My advice is to always recognize others' contributions, even if they do not recognize yours.

Agenda



Edits and additions

Having projects that you have designed altered happens when you work on projects sited in public space. The National Emergency Services Memorial (NESM) in Canberra is an interesting example. Aspect Studios won the competition for the design of the memorial back in the early 2000s and it was a formative project for our practice. In 2021, in a short break between Melbourne's lockdowns, I visited Canberra and discovered the memorial had been extended, presumably to list more names. At no point had Aspect Studios been informed of the intention for there to be changes to the project, let alone been given the opportunity to review the proposed changes and offer advice.

Fortunately, the addition to the memorial was sympathetically designed and well-built, and a visitor might not even notice it was by other designers. While I wanted to scream in anger, I knew the memorial was not mine and Aspect Studios had at no stage been the project's sole author. Was the committee responsible for the memorial required to

ask us, as designers, for permission to make the changes? No. Did they need to seek our advice on the proposed form of the changes? No. But, should they have sought our review? I would say yes. While context – including the project working history, personalities involved and the extent of the alterations – will be of influence in each case, I would suggest that in the majority of cases, the respectful way to proceed is to consult.

Additions have also popped up on the Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project (CD9) in south-east Melbourne. CD9 involved a complex co-authorship situation between multiple designers and entities, as the project's three linear parks under the elevated railway cross three suburban locations. It was always understood by these parties that over time government entities would add more facilities, places and planting to the parks. These additions have indeed begun to occur, with one government agency already having added play and recreation facilities to one of the parks that Aspect Studios originally designed.

The Darling Quarter water play design, one of our signature projects, appears to have been copied by another international firm for a site in China. This is lazy, disrespectful, and suggests good design is simply repeatable: it is not.

Just like the NESM, Aspect Studios were not consulted or given any courtesy call. Unlike the NESM, the additions in this case could have been more sympathetic, the choice of colours and play equipment more thoughtful. The newly inserted playground has a magical climbing tower, a nostalgic view of play that clashes with Aspect Studio's design, which focuses on nature play and preferences more contemporary forms.

A new sports node along CD9 that happened to be designed by an ex-Aspect Studios landscape architect, on the other hand, is better. Aspect Studios was not consulted on this design addition either, however this particular addition observes the original design's principles and responds accordingly, with colours and forms matching the project's other recreation nodes. While the graphic play is a little simple, overall I believe it is a great addition to the original design.

Coming back to the question: should Aspect Studios have been consulted in each of these

cases? Again, while the answer is not black and white, here are a few matters to consider. Firstly, it is very heartening to see council and the community taking ownership over the parks and engaging with the role and function of the parks by making additions. These additions give the overall project additional longevity and legacy. On the other hand, the quality of these additions varies depending on the design – arguably these outcomes might be better if we, as one of the original designers, had been consulted. Consider also that CD9 is a project that has won national and international awards. If the project were a building, would the architects have been given a call? You bet.

It's a minefield out there – “cut and paste” or “influencing”

Full digital models of built public space designs, including a few by Aspect Studios, are out there on the international market. Design is now a product, and we aren't even in control of the sale of it. The Darling

02 — The National Emergency Services Memorial before the extension, with Lake Burley Griffin in the background. Photo: Ben Wrigly

03 — Although the new addition is “sympathetically designed and well-built,” Aspect Studios was not given the chance to review the changes. Photo: Kirsten Bauer

04 — A nostalgic playground at Carnegie Station clashes with Aspect's contemporary design for the Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project. Photo: Kirsten Bauer

05 — A new sports node added along the railway, again without consultation with Aspect Studios, observes the original design principles. Photo: Kirsten Bauer



Agenda

06



06 — Aspect Studios' signature Darling Quarter water play design appears to have been copied by an international firm for a site in China. Photo: Florian Groehn

07 — The Hyperlane, a project Aspect Studios completed in Chengdu, has also “inspired” the work of many others across Asia. Photo: Lu Bing

08 — Full digital models of built public space designs, including a few by Aspect Studios, are out there on the international market. Image: Screenshot from Taobao website.

Quarter water play design, one of our signature projects, appears to have been copied by another international firm for a site in China. This is lazy, disrespectful, and suggests good design is simply repeatable: it is not.

Just recently, we discovered that the design for The Hyperlane, a project Aspect Studios completed in Chengdu, has “inspired” the work of many others across Asia. Scouring the internet turns up other projects that clearly duplicate the distinctive forms of The Hyperlane terraces. On this, internal discussion within the studio has shifted from feelings of outrage, to exploring legal perspectives on the situation, to seeing the proliferation of these strikingly similar projects as flattery and a compliment. Perhaps our best response is that “our one is better,” – that the quality of the idea and its execution is the strongest claim on authorship. While we know that, as designers, we are always building on the work of others that came before, it’s the literalness of the copy that is the issue here.

And no discussion on authorship by a Melburnian would be complete without a mention of Fed Square. When opinion was sought on the proposed partial demolition and insertion of an Apple store, one of the architects of the square publicly declared that he was fine with the change. The most problematic facet of this statement is the assumption that it was the architectural profession which had the right to give permission – not the other professions who had collaborated in the original design, nor the broader community who use this significant public space.

As discussed earlier, constructing the public realm does require designers to give up absolute control of their designs as projects take on their own life and meaning beyond the initial design concept. Nevertheless – and while each situation has its own nuances – it would be nice if landscape architects, like architects, could receive a courtesy call informing them of any upcoming changes. All designers deserve professional respect – for both their ideas and their projects.

Note: These comments are a personal reflection and not the position of Aspect Studios.



On crediting the multidisciplinary project

Faced with grave challenges like climate change, we need to understand what different disciplines are contributing to projects— if we are to design, innovate and collaborate better.

—
Text Ricky Ricardo

In September 2021, a review of a significant new mixed-use development in Melbourne’s central business district was published in *Architecture Australia*, sister magazine to *Landscape Architecture Australia*. Introduced as “a collaborative new tower, plaza and park,” the project made the front cover with an evocative photograph of a lone woman touching a curvaceous water wall. The central narrative was that this was much more than another city tower: it was an exemplary piece of urban design that provided much-needed urban green space and fine-grain mid-block connections. As with any project of its scale, it involved the expertise of many consultants, but the initial competition-winning concept was developed by a team of architects, landscape architects and urban designers.

Yet the review of the project, written by an architecture academic and practising architect, acknowledged only the architects (two practices) as the project’s design authors. The landscape architects were not mentioned once, despite the review discussing the landscape and public realm design at length and even acknowledging the late landscape architect who had designed

the previous plaza on the site. Clearly this was an error, and it was amended in the online version soon after a complaint was raised. I know this because I was the one who raised it, working as the communications manager for the project’s landscape architect at the time. Everyone understands that mistakes happen – but this is a common one. It seems as if almost every landscape architecture practice has its own story of being entirely omitted in the media coverage of a significant project.

I’ve been responsible for marketing and media relations at two landscape architecture practices over the past four years, and I was the editor of this publication prior to that. I’ve witnessed many cases where design authorship was misrepresented or contested among members of a multidisciplinary project. And while not always the case, it was overwhelmingly architecture practices or architecture-trained reviewers who failed to acknowledge the contributions of other disciplines in multidisciplinary projects.

Why does this happen? There are several factors at play here, many of which are structurally entrenched.

It seems as if almost every landscape architecture practice has its own story of being entirely omitted in the media coverage of a significant project.



01



02

The nature of design media

Much of the media coverage of design in Australia and overseas is light and uncritical, with articles routinely built from press releases or design statements alone. Information often comes from a sole source and fact checking – including the fact checking of who has been involved in and contributed to the project – is difficult.

Practices large enough to have the resources to issue press releases, enter awards and supply professional photography dominate this environment as a result. But even large landscape architecture practices struggle to keep up with architecture and other disciplines as landscapes often require time to mature before they can be best photographed. And by the time quality photography can be supplied to media, the project is often not considered new or fresh enough.

A good editor will look beyond the big practices and their PR arsenals and seek out projects or stories through active enquiry, by speaking to people in the field and by planning ahead to allow smaller players or

government bureaucracies the time they need to get their ducks in a row. One of an editor's responsibilities is also to ensure that the reviewer of a project is speaking to the right people. For a multidisciplinary project, this can be exceedingly difficult, and trust between all the parties involved in the project is required. While everyone involved is responsible for ensuring the correct information is given, in the case of the review, it falls to the reviewer (and editor) to ensure that one company is not unfairly over-represented over another.

In the competitive online environment, there is precious little time for any of this – with the push for quantity and speed over rigour and balance. For print, there is a far slower pace, and we can expect a higher standard. But enter stage left: architectural bias. Many, if not most, of the people I've met working in design media have an architectural background of some kind, and there's no discounting the impact this has had and continues to have in the representation of multidisciplinary projects.

01 — Landscapes can require time to mature before they look their best in photographs, by which time they are “old” and of less media interest than new built works. Pictured: Mature planting at the courtyards at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne by Rush Wright Associates and ARM Architecture. Photo: John Gollings

02 — Established planting frames the edges of the seating at Monash University Clayton Campus Eastern Precinct Landscape by TCL. Photo: Will Salter



03 — For multidisciplinary projects such as Fish Lane Town Square by RPS Group and Richards and Spence, ensuring all contributors are appropriately represented and credited is important. Photo: Scott Burrows

04 — Architecture and landscape are integrated at Prahran Square by Lyons Architecture and Aspect Studios, where the ground plane has been flipped up to create a shallow amphitheatre that houses retail spaces underneath. Photo: John Gollings

The role of the reviewer

For the project reviewer, exercising balance and independence is critical. If the project is complex and involved the expertise of many disciplines, it's incumbent on the reviewer to not simply take one perspective on a project as the only one. Most project reviews begin with a site tour with the designers. If only one representative turns up, or members from one practice, that should be a red flag, and the reviewer should find out whether others were indeed invited and informed about the review.

Another hurdle the reviewer faces is that the “messaging” of large multidisciplinary projects is often tightly controlled by clients, with design consultants often contractually gagged from speaking to the media. That said, it is often still possible for design consultants to convince these clients to allow them to offer deeper insights – if the clients are allowed to review the final copy. Allowing this review can sometimes be a necessary concession.

The role of the practice

It's impossible to fully understand the power dynamics and politics within a practice that may lead it to omit a key partner on a project or exaggerate its own involvement on its websites, social media channels or in the media. It could be a lack of respect for the value of the collaboration, a sense of ownership over all aspects of the project (we selected the team, therefore we are responsible for everything), intense internal pressure for business development and marketing, or just lack of communication between design and marketing teams. I believe it's the latter two that are behind most authorship disputes that I've been privy to – where two practices have worked well together for the duration of a project, but one practice has a larger and more active marketing department under pressure to find opportunities to publicize its involvement wherever possible. With architecture being a far larger profession than landscape architecture, there are naturally more



04

marketing and communications specialists working in architecture. It's always better to be generous with project team acknowledgement than to risk a dispute and the reputational damage that can bring. Appearing generous when it comes to crediting is good marketing anyway.

Role of language

And lastly, we come to the role of language in misrepresenting authorship. Any landscape architect would be acutely aware of how frequently the term "landscaping" is used to describe their work. While often not maliciously done, when it is done, it reduces the contribution of the landscape architect to something that sounds separate to design, as if it can be done with a shovel and barrow after the serious stuff is complete. This phrase feels most dismissive when used in the crediting of urban design projects, where the by-line reads "[project name] by [architect name], with landscaping by [landscape architect name]."

Landscaping is not the only obsolete term that is seemingly entrenched in the way design can be covered in the media. Another perplexing phrase is that of the "artist's impression," used to describe project renders and visualizations. These are often critical outputs from designers, which they own copyright to, yet they are attributed to imaginary artists when published or broadcast in traditional media.

Moving forward

These issues around authorship are important. The construction and operation of buildings are together responsible for up to 38 percent of annual carbon emissions worldwide, according to the United Nations' Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction¹. As we confront the increasingly terrifying impacts of climate change, we need a clear and truthful picture of our professional capabilities to understand how we can innovate, collaborate and do better. We need to do better. And we can't let vanity or ego get in the way.

1. Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, "2021 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction: Towards a Zero-emission, Efficient and Resilient Buildings and Construction Sector," *Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction*, October 2021, globalabc.org/resources/publications/2021-global-status-report-buildings-and-construction

Authorship in the Chinese context

Over the last two decades, landscape architecture in China has gone from a centralized discipline with little creativity or critical thought to a diverse field in which individual practices and academics are increasingly influential.

Text Ruiqi Shen





02

01 — A Floating Forest: Fish Tail Park in Nanchang City is a “sponge city” by Turenscape, one of the first and largest private design firms in China. Photo: Kongjian Yu, Turenscape.

02 — In his work, Zhu Yufan seeks to infuse traditional Chinese culture into landscape architecture in the context of contemporary cities. Image: Zoomarch.

03 — The Wave by Atelier Scale uses design to reconsider the life cycle of a temporary garden and to promote sustainability. Photo: Nancy Studio.

In recent years, more and more young Chinese landscape architecture studios have emerged on the international stage, including Z+T Studio, Lab D+H and Atelier Scale. The emergence of these designers reflects the rising status of landscape architecture in China’s rapid urbanization. While independent small design firms are common worldwide, they are a new phenomenon in the Chinese context. This lag owes much to the People’s Republic of China’s design institutes, which first emerged in the early 1960s.¹ Borrowed from the Soviet Union, this model was conceived to carry out large-scale, state-directed tasks in an organized and efficient manner. The individual identity of designers did not exist within this work structure. For students in architecture and related fields, design institutes were the only employment choice – and efficiency and hard work, rather than creativity and critical thought, were the qualities required to compete and succeed within them.²

In the era of a planned economy, these state-owned enterprises continued to dominate the design and construction stages of most

projects, undertaking all fields of business from urban planning to architecture, landscape architecture to interior design, and policy to construction.³ Within this structure, the identity of landscape architecture as its own discipline was minimal (the field is considered non-essential).

Since the design institute era, Chinese universities have provided landscape architects places to learn and practise, although it has remained difficult to undertake individual work because the institute model extended to universities with the expectation that all work would contribute to society. College design institutes emerged as a result; one example, Tongji Architectural Design, was established in 1958 and now comprises more than 5,000 people.⁴ These large-scale institutes remain a significant force in contemporary urban development. However, the original intention for teaching and research has changed: since Chinese reform and opening-up, these college design institutes must fund themselves, aim to enhance their competitiveness in the market and contribute to the college’s income.⁵



One positive effect of the market economy has been the accelerated privatization of design institutes. Most have been transformed into joint-stock small-unit operations (SUOs) of 20 to 30 people, with independent funding and external management. Additionally, professional categories are now divided into specialized units, one of which includes landscape architecture. But as a result of accumulated bureaucracy and bottom-up systemic change, design institutes remain giant urban space production machines. Institutes rely on long-term market relations (*guanxi*) and geographical advantages to compete, maintain reputations and wield influence through cooperation with well-known international firms. As a result, their designers still face stylized, mechanistic design processes that facilitate neither independent thinking and creativity nor responsiveness to local and cultural demands.

With the progress of China's globalization, an increasing number of landscape architects who studied overseas have returned to China to offer a new approach to landscape architecture driven by individual practice

or academic position. Yu Kongjian's studio Turenscape is one of the best known. His concepts of eco-landscape, "sponge city" and nature-based solutions have helped the landscape architecture discipline gain independence in China and, at times, even taken precedence over planning and architecture. In addition to Turenscape, a boom of landscape companies initiated by one or two directors arose in the early twenty-first century, such as Ecoland (Chen Yuezhong), L&A Group (Li Baozhang) and Beijing East Design (Li Jianwei). These firms have now developed into large enterprises with hundreds of employees, and they design residential and commercial landscapes for private developers and municipal landscapes for governments. This wave has dramatically enhanced and promoted the status of these landscape leaders and enterprises in the design industry and, more broadly, in government and society.

Chinese university academic leaders have also emerged in landscape design practice, setting up independent studios that combine traditional Chinese garden philosophies with international perspectives.

These guerilla-like studios are rooted in community or urban public spaces, where they test ideas through direct interaction with users.



04 — Lab D+H's design for Yongqing Fang Alleyways avoids relocating the original residents and focuses on the activation of existing resources. Photo: Arch-Exist.

For example, Zhu Yufan, a professor at Tsinghua University, has advanced the design theory and method of “three relationships,” aiming to integrate traditional Chinese culture into the practice of landscape architecture in complex contemporary cities.⁶ Meng Zhaozhen (1932–2022), a professor at Beijing Forestry University, was a respected authority in traditional Chinese gardens and the only member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering in the field of landscape. These eminent leaders not only pass on the knowledge of traditional Chinese gardens but use their practical works to guide young designers, especially those with study or work experience overseas. They are highly influential in educating a new generation about how to explore and practise contemporary landscape architecture with a more pluralistic and inclusive attitude in the Chinese context.

Increasingly, severe issues – rapid urbanization, climate change, car-dominated cities, localism, spatial justice – inspire

the emergence of smaller-scale design practices. Small studios such as Z+T Studio, Lab D+H and Atelier Scale allow employees to express specific design philosophies and attitudes. Compared with institutes and large companies, these guerrilla-like studios are rooted in community or urban public spaces, where they test ideas through direct interaction with users. This practice model makes them flexible and dynamic, and their specific practice identities are of great academic and social value to the emerging discipline of landscape architecture.

In short, over the last two decades, the identity and authorship of China's landscape architects have undergone a dramatic transformation. A silent discipline embedded within state-controlled design institutes now comprises a diverse set of ideas, attitudes and knowledge emerging from large landscape companies, experts in traditional Chinese gardens and independent design studios. An increasing number of Chinese design institutes and

landscape companies realize the importance of cultivating local design voices, which should provide opportunities for a new generation eager to challenge and innovate.

1. Q. L. Xue, “中国特色的建筑设计院,” (“Design Institute with China's Characteristics”), 2004, *Time and Architecture*, vol. 01, 27–31.
2. Q. L. Xue, “中国特色的建筑设计院,” 2004.
3. J. F. Zhu, *Forms and Politics: An Approach to Thinking in Architecture: Collection of Essays 1994–2014* (Tongji University Press: 2018).
4. Q. L. Xue, “中国特色的建筑设计院,” 2004.
5. The Chinese reform and opening-up refers to the program of economic reforms termed “Socialism with Chinese characteristics” and “Socialist market economy” in the People's Republic of China (PRC) led by Deng Xiaoping, the then-president of China. This reform included two stages: the first took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and involved the decollectivization of agriculture, the opening up of the country to foreign investment and the giving of permission to entrepreneurs to start businesses. The second stage of reform unfolded over the late 1980s and 1990s, and involved the privatization and contracting out of many state-owned industries.
6. M. F. Lin, “当代中国景观设计的思想演进与创作实践研究,” (“Research on the Thought Evolution and Creation Practices of Contemporary Chinese Landscape Architecture”), PhD dissertation, 2014, Dalian University of Technology.

Landscapes of EXCELLENCE

We bring your project to life.

With more than 35 years' experience building the most intricate designs, you can trust us to deliver your innovative project.

*Mount St Joseph Girls' College,
Winner of 2022 Landscape Victoria
Commercial Landscape of the Year*



(03) 9720 0113 | info@ptalandscapes.com.au | ptalandscapes.com.au



The Eureka Modular Restroom Series



- Standard and custom designs
- Multiple configurations and finishes available
- Aluminium construction ensures durability in Australia's tough climate
- On-slab structure is ideal for parks, public beaches and car parks
- Pre-fabricated and delivered to site to reduce installation time

With more than 30 years' experience delivering open space structures around Australia, Landmark Products is the ideal partner for the supply and national installation of your next project.

For more information visit landmarkpro.com.au or call 1300 768 230



Explore the Eureka Modular Restroom Series

